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THESIS

MARITIME INTERDICTION IN COUNTERINSURGENCY: THE ROLE OF THE SRI LANKAN NAVY IN THE DEFEAT OF THE TAMIL TIGERS

by

Justin O. Smith

June 2010

Thesis Advisor:	Douglas Porch
Second Reader:	Jeffrey Kline

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In the last several years, the United States has made a significant effort to improve its ability to conduct counterinsurgency operations in land-locked Afghanistan and primarily land operations in Iraq. However, a large number of countries fighting insurgencies today have large maritime borders. This thesis will demonstrate how maritime interdiction can effectively contribute to counterinsurgency operations. Sri Lanka provides a unique perspective on how to defeat an insurgency. Through decades of trial and error, Sri Lanka's final attempt to defeat the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) took less than three years. Several elements were core to the defeat of the LTTE. First, the Sri Lankan government showed the political will needed to use military force to defeat the LTTE. Second, the Sri Lankan Navy played a critical role in countering the LTTE's arms smuggling, maritime terrorism, and piracy operations. Third, support from the international community allowed Sri Lanka to handle its domestic "terrorism" problems without outside intervention. Finally, the Sri Lankan Army employed an effective military offensive to destroy the insurgent forces. Sri Lanka's successful counterinsurgency reinforces the importance of prioritizing logistics and stands as a test case to calibrate U.S. assistance in future counterinsurgencies.

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MARITIME INTERDICTION IN COUNTERINSURGENCY: THE ROLE OF THE SRI LANKAN NAVY IN THE DEFEAT OF THE TAMIL TIGERS

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
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ABSTRACT

In the last several years, the United States has made a significant effort to improve its ability to conduct counterinsurgency operations in land-locked Afghanistan and primarily land operations in Iraq. However, a large number of countries fighting insurgencies today have large maritime borders. This thesis will demonstrate how maritime interdiction can effectively contribute to counterinsurgency operations. Sri Lanka provides a unique perspective on how to defeat an insurgency. Through decades of trial and error, Sri Lanka's final attempt to defeat the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) took less than three years. Several elements were core to the defeat of the LTTE. First, the Sri Lankan government showed the political will needed to use military force to defeat the LTTE. Second, the Sri Lankan Navy played a critical role in countering the LTTE's arms smuggling, maritime terrorism, and piracy operations. Third, support from the international community allowed Sri Lanka to handle its domestic "terrorism" problems without outside intervention. Finally, the Sri Lankan Army employed an effective military offensive to destroy the insurgent forces. Sri Lanka's successful counterinsurgency reinforces the importance of prioritizing logistics and stands as a test case to calibrate U.S. assistance in future counterinsurgencies.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AGL	Automatic Grenade Launcher
CFA	Ceasefire Agreement
DMI	Directorate of Military Intelligence
DMK	Dravidian Progress Federation
EIC	British East India Company
EPRLF	Eelam People's Liberation Front
EROS	Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students
FAC	Fast Attack Craft
FDL	Forward Defense Line
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
IBL	International Boundary Line
IED	Improvised Explosive Device
IMINT	Imagery Intelligence
IPC	Inshore Patrol Craft
IPKF	India Peacekeeping Force
ISLA	Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement
JVP	Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna
LOC	Lines of Communication
LRRP	Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol
LTTE	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam
MSB	Minesweeping Boat
MSC	Military Sealift Command
NFZ	No Fire Zone
OPV	Offshore Patrol Vessel
PBR	River Patrol Boat
PLOTE	People's Liberation Organization for Tamil Eelam
RABS	Rapid Action Boat Squadrons
RAW	Research and Analysis Wing
RHIB	Rigid Hull Inflatable Boat
SBC	Small Boat Concept

SIGINT	Signals Intelligence
SLA	Sri Lankan Army
SLFP	Sri Lanka Freedom Party
SLMM	Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission
SLN	Sri Lankan Navy
SLOC	Sea Lines of Communication
TELO	Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization
TULF	Tamil United Liberation Front
UNP	United National Party
UPA	United Progressive Alliance
UPFA	United People’s Freedom Alliance
ZDI	Zimbabwe Defence Industries

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I. IMPORTANCE OF MARITIME INTERDICTION

A. INTRODUCTION

In the last several years, the United States has made a significant effort to improve its ability to conduct counterinsurgency operations in land-locked Afghanistan and primarily land operations in Iraq. However, a large number of countries fighting insurgencies today have large maritime borders.[1] The Philippines has been fighting against Abu Sayyaf and the Morro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) for several years. Laskar Jihad has infested Indonesia. Jemaah Islamiah (JI) is fighting to create an Islamic state that would include Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, parts of Cambodia, southern Thailand, and southern Philippines.[2] The Movement of the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) has been actively conducting piracy and terrorism in Nigeria. The Somalia coast is home to pirates. Insurgents in Colombia use that country's extensive coastline and its network of rivers to export drugs and import arms and money. These examples, together with the United States historical experience in maritime interdiction, demonstrate that it is folly to ignore the maritime dimensions of counterinsurgency. Admiral Michael Mullen addressed our future state of conflict in this way:

> Most of us at the senior level believe we live in a time of persistent conflict. We don't get to pick where we go or what conflict we're in. And in that regard, we believe that we will be engaged for the foreseeable future–10 or 15 or 20 years and that we will be deployable and deploying in places that some of us couldn't even imagine even right now. So it's not just about winning the wars that we're in, which is at the top of the list, but we've also got to be ready for the future.[3]

Given the probability that the United States will be involved in conflict in countries with significant maritime borders, it is important to establish how the Navy can

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[1] Michael Lindberg and Daniel Todd, *Brown-, Green-, and Blue-Water Fleets: The Influence of Geography on Naval Warfare, 1861 to the Present* (Westport, Conn: Praeger, 2001), 242.

[2] Martin N. Murphy, "Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers," *JANE'S INTELLIGENCE REVIEW* (01 June 2006), http://search.janes.com (accessed 09/04/2009).

[3] Michael Mullen, "JCS Speech: Naval Postgraduate School Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony," (11 August 2009) http://www.jcs.mil/speech.aspx?ID=1231 (accessed 09/06/2009).

effectively contribute to the complex world of counterinsurgency. This chapter will demonstrate how maritime interdiction can effectively contribute to counterinsurgency operations.

B. PURPOSE OF MARITIME INTERDICTION OPERATIONS

Maritime interdiction is used in the full range of military operations, from belligerent actions such as blockades to more coercive actions such as sanctions enforcement. Joint Publication 3-03 describes interdiction operations as "actions to divert, disrupt, delay, or destroy an enemy's surface capabilities before they can be used effectively against friendly forces, or to otherwise achieve objectives."[4] In the current threat environment, the maritime role in counterinsurgency operations is likely to prove critical in future conflicts. "Three-quarters of the world's population, four-fifths of its capital cities, and almost all of the world's productive capacity" is located within two hundred miles of the coast.[5] Many of these areas are replete with political, social, and economic conflict that tends to lead to insurgencies.[6] Additionally, insurgencies are rarely, if ever, self-sufficient. The maritime domain provides insurgents and terrorists with an environment to conduct illicit activities to support their operations. They require funding, weapons, equipment, food and other resources to conduct operations successively. Insurgencies that are dependent on external support are vulnerable to interdiction.[7] Isolating the enemy by attacking their critical vulnerabilities and centers of gravity effectively weakens their capability to fight.[8] Exploiting logistics networks by severing enemy lines of communication (LOC) and degrading command, control, communication, and information capabilities would effectively weaken an insurgency's

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[4] JOINT STAFF, *Doctrine for Joint Interdiction Operations* (Washington DC: 1997), http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA357795 (accessed 11/20/2009).

[5] CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS, *The U.S. Navy's Vision for Confronting Irregular Challenges* (Washington DC: 2010), http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA514782 (accessed 04/10/2010).

[6] Martin N. Murphy, "The Blue, Green, and Brown: Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency on the Water," *CONTEMPORARY SECURITY POLICY* 28, no. 1 (2007), 63–79, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/1352326071240351 (accessed 11/13/2009).

[7] JOINT STAFF, *Doctrine for Joint Interdiction Operations.*

[8] Paul J. Wille, *Operational Isolation of the Enemy in Offensive Urban Operations* (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2000), http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA378659 (accessed 11/20/2009).

ability to conduct operations, enabling ground forces to move in and defeat the insurgent forces during a weakened state.[9] "Successful operations may depend on successful interdiction operations; for instance, to isolate the battle or weaken the enemy force before battle is fully joined."[10] Furthermore, maritime interdiction has the added advantage of protecting the host nation from insurgent destabilization.[11]

C. HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF MARITIME INTERDICTION

British, French, and American histories all document the importance of maritime interdiction in counterinsurgencies. The British experience began in the American Revolutionary War and continued through most of the Cold War era in campaigns including Palestine, Aden, Oman, Malaysia, and Northern Ireland.[12] France, likewise, had extensive experience with maritime interdiction in counterinsurgencies in Southeast Asia and most notably during the Algerian War.[13] The United States has a long history of conducting maritime interdiction beginning with the Barbary Wars against pirates off the North African coast and continuing through the Vietnam War with Operations Market Time and Game Warden.[14] The U.S. Coast Guard has extensive experience with maritime interdiction from the prohibition era "Rum Wars" to today's "War on Drugs." The following briefly summarizes a few of the most relevant historical examples of maritime interdiction.

1. British Involvement in the "Indonesian Confrontation"

The Royal Navy played a decisive role in the defense of Malaysia and Singapore against Indonesia's active confrontation with Malaysia (1962–1967). In 1964, Indonesia

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[9] Paul J. Wille, *Operational Isolation of the Enemy in Offensive Urban Operations* (Newport, RI: Naval War College, 2000), http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA378659 (accessed 09/20/2009).

[10] JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF, *Doctrine for Joint Operations* (Washington DC: 2001), http://handle.dtic.mil/100.2/ADA434258 (accessed 09/10/2009).

[11] Murphy, *The Blue, Green, and Brown: Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency on the Water*, 63–79.

[12] Tim Benbow, "Maritime Forces and Counter-Insurgency," *Contemporary Security Policy* 28, no. 1 (April 1, 2007), 80–95, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/13523260701240419 (accessed 09/03/2009).

[13] Bernard Estival, "The French Navy and the Algerian War," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 25, no. 2 (2002), 79–94.

[14] Murphy, *The Blue, Green, and Brown: Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency on the Water*, 63–79.

began carrying out seaborne incursions into West Malaysia to destabilize the government through infiltration and sabotage operations. In order to avoid detection, Indonesian militants crossed the Malacca and Singapore Straits at night in sampans they captured from fishermen. Once in West Malaysia, the militants either organized in groups to carry out attacks on government facilities or individually planted bombs to terrorize the population. The attacks were meant to weaken the government politically and economically without devolving into full-scale war.[15]

Malaysia countered the Indonesian incursions through a concerted effort by the British Royal Navy's Far East Fleet, the Royal Malaysian Navy, the Marine Branch of the Malaysian Police Force, and the Singapore Marine Police Force. The forces were employed in three lines of defense: offshore, inshore, and coastal.[16]

> The offshore patrols were carried out by Far East Fleet and Malaysian Naval ships and offshore Police craft, inshore patrols by the smaller police craft, and beach patrolling and coast-watching by the various police, military and volunteer organizations set up for this task.[17]

More than fifty ships and craft were deployed each night to interdict the Indonesian incursions. Maritime patrols were also flown by the Royal Air Force and Royal Malaysian Air Force to assist in the interdiction operations. However, the area to be covered was vast compared to the resources available to prevent Indonesian incursions by sea. In addition to concentrating forces in the high threat areas, intelligence was heavily depended on to warn of Indonesian intentions. These efforts resulted in the interdiction at sea of more than 80 percent of all attempted incursions by Indonesian forces into West Malaysia after 1964.[18]

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[15] Gisborne, "Naval Operations in the Malacca and Singapore Straits 1964–66," *Naval Review* 60, no. 1 (January 1967), 43.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

2. The French Experience in the Algerian War

During the Algerian War (1954–1962), the primary mission of the French Navy was to cut the LOCs of insurgents attempting to smuggle arms into Algeria by conducting a coastal blockade. This required more than 800 nautical miles of coastline to be monitored and illicit shipments to be intercepted. Their task was complicated due to the high commercial traffic in the sea route that ran between Port Said and Gibraltar. Distinguishing from illicit activity and normal commercial traffic required a sustained and systematic effort. The French were able to overcome this obstacle using intelligence to guide searches, aerial reconnaissance to track and report, and surface vessels to identify and inspect suspect vessels. The operations required the ongoing employment of about 20 warships, dozens of small craft and at least 10 aircraft throughout the war. Their efforts resulted in the interception of 1,350 tons of military equipment, thereby preventing nearly all supplies of arms and ammunition from reaching insurgents in Algeria directly by sea.[19]

3. The U.S. Experience in the Vietnam War

During Operation Market Time (1965–1968), the United States and South Vietnam conducted surveillance and patrolling operations along the 1,200 miles of South Vietnamese coast in order to limit the seaborne smuggling of arms and supplies to the Vietcong. The blockade was implemented using destroyers, minesweepers, patrol craft (swift boats), and patrol gunboats. More than 700,000 vessels were inspected or boarded during the operation. It was a tremendously successful coastal interdiction operation and resulted in the North Vietnamese being forced to use the Ho Chi Minh trail to supply the Vietcong in South Vietnam.[20]

Operation Game Warden (1966–1968) had more limited success. Game Warden attempted to control the movement of enemy personnel and cargo on the inland waterways of South Vietnam. Their terrain featured more than 3,000 nautical miles of

[19] Estival, *The French Navy and the Algerian War*, 79–94.

[20] Edward J. Marolda and G. Wesley Pryce, *A Short History of the United States Navy and the Southeast Asian Conflict, 1950-1975* (Washington, D.C: Naval Historical Center, Dept. of the Navy, 1984), 131.

rivers, canals, and streams of the Mekong Delta. This transportation network spread throughout most of South Vietnam and was more reliable than the limited road and rail infrastructure. The River Patrol Force (Task Force 116) consisted of river patrol boats (PBR), minesweeping boats (MSB), SEAL Teams, a helicopter detachment, and amphibious landing ships converted to provide floating bases for the riverine forces. Game Warden operations were limited to the vital water passages of Rung Sat and the large Mekong Delta Rivers. Most operations consisted of checking the cargo and paperwork of boat traffic, conducting night ambushes at enemy crossing points, and enforcing curfew restrictions. With only 140 PBRs on the larger inland waterways, Game Warden forces boarded and inspected more than 400,000 vessels resulting in the interdiction of 2,000 Viet Cong craft and the capture or killing of over 1,400 enemy personnel. Their significant efforts forced the Viet Cong to use less efficient transportation routes on the smaller rivers and canals.[21]

4. The U.S. Coast Guard's Role in the "Rum War"

The U.S. Constitution's 18th Amendment made the manufacture, sale, and transportation of alcohol illegal in the United States from 1920 to the end of 1933. During the Prohibition era, manufacturing and importing liquor became a very lucrative criminal business. Although liquor continued to be manufactured locally through illegal stills, the "principal trade in illegal alcohol occurred through the importation of foreign alcohol into the U.S. by sea."[22] Foreign manufacturers readily supplied the alcohol either directly, in the case of "Rum Row" off the coast of New York, or indirectly by mass importation into tiny Caribbean countries that later transferred the liquor to the United States through organized crime syndicates. Unable to interdict even 5 percent of the illegal flow of liquor, by 1924 the U.S. Coast Guard substantially expanded its fleet and

[21] Edward J. Marolda and G. Wesley Pryce, *A Short History of the United States Navy and the Southeast Asian Conflict, 1950-1975* (Washington, D.C: Naval Historical Center, Dept. of the Navy, 1984), 131.

[22] Eric S. Ensign, Russell G. Swenson and Robert E. Kramerk, *Intelligence in the Rum War at Sea, 1920-1933* (Washington, DC: Joint Military Intelligence College, 2001), 92, http://www.dia.mil/college/pubs/38038.htm (accessed 09/20/2009).

took on counter-smuggling operations as its primary mission.[23] Even as the Coast Guard increased to 330 vessels, they had a vast area to patrol in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Gulf of Mexico coasts of the United States. With few resources, they used intelligence collection to assist in positioning naval forces in the high threat smuggling areas. Once a high threat smuggling route was identified, layered defenses were set up along the coast.[24]

> The general plan to suppress smuggling was for destroyers to patrol assigned areas at sea, making first contact with suspected rum runners. The destroyers would then trail the suspects, handing them off to patrol boats 20 to 30 nautical miles of shore. The patrol boats would be responsible for trailing the suspect vessels until they either entered the 12-mile limit and could be stopped and searched, or turned back to sea. While the destroyers and patrol boats patrolled offshore, the picket boats would patrol the shoreline to discourage the landing of alcohol on the beach.[25]

With more than 60,000 square miles of territorial water to patrol, it would have been nearly impossible for the Coast Guard to implement a strict blockade with its relatively small naval force. They did, however, greatly reduce the amount of liquor smuggled into the United States by sea and reduced the profitability of rum runners.[26] The lessons learned from this era inevitably assisted the Coast Guard and Navy in its current efforts to limit the amount of illicit narcotics from entering the United States.

D. CONCLUSION

Without question, the United States Navy is the most capable conventional navy in the world. With our Military Sealift Command (MSC) ships and forward bases, we are capable of projecting power through our warship fleet to every corner of the world. However, some of our capabilities for fighting insurgencies in a maritime environment have atrophied. Marines have been occupied with the land wars in Iraq and Afghanistan resulting in only a small percentage being familiar with amphibious or riverine operations. Naval Special Warfare units have also placed many maritime missions on the

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[23] Malcolm Francis Willoughby, *Rum War at Sea* (Washington: U.S. GPO, 1964), 161.

[24] Ensign, Swenson and Kramerk, *Intelligence in the Rum War at Sea, 1920-1933*, 92.

[25] Ibid., 15.

[26] Willoughby, *Rum War at Sea*, 164.

back-burner due to the current ground wars. In addition, Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal units have been so consumed with the counter-IED campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan that the underwater mine-countermeasures mission and other maritime missions have fallen by the wayside. History has shown the importance of maritime interdiction in counterinsurgency operations, and insurgencies currently taking place throughout the world demonstrate the relevance of maritime dominance. A force capable of conducting interdiction operations in the rivers, littorals, and seas is a critical piece in obtaining maritime dominance.

Sri Lanka's civil war provides a unique perspective on counterinsurgency strategies. Through decades of trial and error, Sri Lanka's final campaign to defeat the LTTE took less than three years. Military victory came in the wake of failed attempts at diplomatic and internal negotiations, and of India's failed intervention. In the end, it took traditional military offensive operations to defeat the LTTE. Once this extremist element of the Tamil population was removed, conflict resolution was able to progress by addressing the root causes of the conflict. Several elements were core to the defeat of the LTTE. First, the Sri Lankan government showed the political will needed to use military force to defeat the LTTE. Second, the Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) played a critical role in countering the LTTE's arms smuggling, maritime terrorism, and piracy operations resulting in a severely weakened LTTE. Third, the fact that terrorism was perceived as an international threat following 9/11 allowed Sri Lanka to handle its domestic "terrorism" problems without direct outside intervention. Finally, the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) employed an effective military offensive to destroy the insurgent forces. Sri Lanka's successful counterinsurgency reinforces the importance of prioritizing logistics and stands as a test case to calibrate U.S. assistance in future counterinsurgencies, especially those involving a large maritime domain. The following chapters will analyze Sri Lanka's conflict from its roots to the defeat of the LTTE in May 2009.

II. SRI LANKA'S PATH TO VIOLENT CONFLICT

A. INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka's "Black July" violence in 1983 marked the beginning of its twenty-six-year civil war. A relatively minor attack by one of the many Tamil militant groups at the time, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), left thirteen Sri Lankan soldiers dead. Retaliatory violence by the island's Sinhalese majority produced island-wide anti-Tamil riots in which thousands of Tamils were killed, maimed, and robbed. Hundreds of thousands more were made homeless as their homes and businesses were burned and looted.[27] Government complicity, or at least failure to promptly intervene, put Sri Lanka on a path to civil war.[28]

In the years that followed, several hundred thousand Tamils fled Sri Lanka to escape the violence and oppression. The more privileged Tamils fled Sri Lanka for Western countries, such as Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, France, and Australia. This group of diaspora later became critical in funding the Tamil secessionist cause. Less fortunate Sri Lankan Tamils fled to refugee camps in Tamil Nadu, India, and became vital contributors to the LTTE's arms smuggling network.[29] By war's end in May 2009, between 80,000 to 100,000 people had died as a result of the ethnic violence.[30] This chapter will analyze the history of Sri Lanka from its pre-colonial roots to the "Black July" riots of 1983 to determine how the Sinhalese and Tamils of Sri Lanka devolved from peaceful cohabitation to violent ethnic conflict.

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[27] A. Imtiyaz and B. Stavis, "Ethno-Political Conflict in Sri Lanka," *Journal of Third World Studies* 25, no. 2 (Fall 2008), 135, http://proquest.umi.com.libproxy.nps.edu/pqdweb?did=1570611111&Fmt=7&clientId=11969&RQT=309&VName=PQD (accessed 2/20/2009).

[28] Ibid., 140.

[29] John Soloman and B. C. Tan, "Feeding the Tiger - how Sri Lanka Insurgents Fund their War," *JANE'S INTELLIGENCE REVIEW* (01 September 2007), http://search.janes.com.libproxy.nps.edu (accessed 03/11/2010).

[30] Laura MacInnis, "Sri Lanka on Guard for Separatist Revival - Minister," *Reuters* (02 June 2009) http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSL21017354 (accessed 2/2/2010).

B. GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND

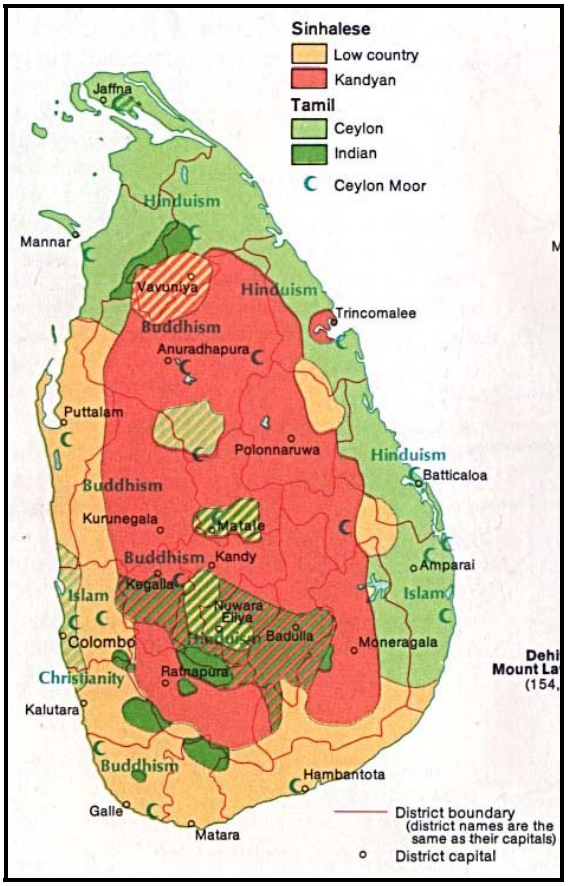

Figure 1. Ethnic Communities in Sri Lanka (1976)[31]

Twenty-six miles off India's southern coast, Sri Lanka is a teardrop-shaped island approximately the size of Ireland or West Virginia with a population of more than twenty million.[32] It is comprised of a multiethnic society with two primary linguistic divisions: Sinhala and Tamil (see Figure 1). Sinhalese, the island's majority population (74 percent), are mainly Buddhists.[33] The minority Tamil speakers do not make up a single bloc but are made up of the Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamils, and Moors. The Sri

[31] University of Texas, Map Library. http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/islands_oceans_poles/sri_lanka_charts_76.jpg (accessed 03/11/2010).

[32] Neil DeVotta, "Illiberalism and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 1 (January 2002), 85, http://proquest.umi.com.libproxy.nps.edu/pqdweb?did=113197642&Fmt=7&clientId=11969&RQT=309&VName=PQD (accessed 2/20/2009).

[33] John Coakley, "The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict," in *The Cass Series in Regional and Federal Studies*, 2nd rev. and expanded ed. (London; Portland, Or: F. Cass, 2003), 174.

Lankan Tamils (12.6 percent of the population) and Indian Tamils (5.5 percent of the population) are mainly Hindu. The Moors (7.4 percent of the population) are Muslims who primarily speak Tamil but also have a significant bilingual population. Christians are found on both sides of the linguistic divide and make up about 7 percent of the population.[34] Other significant minorities include Burghers, from Dutch and Portuguese decent, and Malays.

For much of Sri Lanka's history, in particular during the civil war period from 1983 to 2009, the island was physically divided on ethnic lines between the Sinhalese, principally living in the island's central and southern regions, and the Sri Lankan Tamils occupying the northern and eastern regions. Moors and Indian Tamils considered their ethnic identities distinct from that of the Sri Lankan Tamils. Moors had communities throughout Sri Lanka with a large concentration in the east. Indian Tamils were concentrated in the plantation areas in the center of the island.[35] In contemporary history, the country's multiethnic capital, Colombo, was the main exception to the geographic division between the Sinhalese and Sri Lankan Tamils, although anti-Tamil riots forced many Tamils out of Colombo and even out of Sri Lanka altogether.

C. HISTORY

Sri Lanka's early history is documented in the Buddhist chronicle, the *Mahavamsa*. Sinhalese Buddhists in Sri Lanka's post-1948 independence period used the history to declare their claim as the legitimate inhabitants of the island. Following immigrations of the Indo-Aryan tribes (the origins of Sinhalese) from northern India, Sinhalese kingdoms were established and consolidated by the first century BC.[36] The chronicles also document successive invasions and incursions from the Tamils of southern India.[37] Sri Lanka's most significant invasion took place during the tenth

[34] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 174.

[35] Ibid., 176.

[36] K. M. De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, Rev. & updated ed. (New Delhi; New York, New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 18.

[37] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 19.

century when the Chola Empire from India took control of most of the island.[38] The attacks forced the Sinhalese people and their kings to retreat into the hills and wetlands in search of security.[39] Tamils, both settlers and members of the invading Indian armies, took advantage of this opportunity by occupying the north and east of Sri Lanka. By the thirteen century, a Tamil kingdom was established with Jaffna at its heart.[40] Political elites during post-independence used the history of invading Tamils from southern India to create a fear of Sri Lankan Tamils, thus creating ethno-linguistic divisions in modern society.

Beginning in the sixteenth century, the island went through three successive periods of colonialism. The Portuguese colonized Sri Lanka in 1505 with a primary interest in controlling the island's commerce. They used indirect rule to manage the coastal regions. Much of the island remained in control of local kingdoms.[41] The Dutch expelled the Portuguese from Sri Lanka in the seventeenth century.[42] Again, most of the island remained independent of colonial rule; however, the Dutch imposed a trade monopoly on the entire island, which limited the ability of Sri Lankan rulers to trade with southern India.[43] By 1796, the maritime regions of Sri Lanka changed hands once more as the British East India Company (EIC) wrestled control of the island from the Dutch.[44] The British Crown declared Sri Lanka a colony in 1802 and assumed control of the maritime regions from the EIC.[45] Sri Lanka's inland areas, however, remained in the hands of the Kandyan kingdom. It was not until 1815 that the British saw their opportunity to defeat the last remaining kingdom in Sri Lanka. The defeat of the Kandyan kingdom put the entire island under the sole control of the British.[46]

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[38] Chelvadurai Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 25.

[39] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 87.

[40] Ibid., 87.

[41] Ibid., 175.

[42] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 26.

[43] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 212.

[44] Ibid., 245.

[45] Ibid., 275.

[46] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 306.

From this period, the British had a transforming affect on Sri Lanka's social and economic organization. Christian missionary organizations were encouraged to proselytize by the Colonial Office. Their aim was to convert and educate the island's elite population in English. The hope was that Christianity would filter down to the rest of the population. Reforms were also introduced to abolish the caste system during this period.[47] Additionally, the British organized the construction of a network of roads and a railway on the island for the primary purpose of administrative, security and political functions, but they also served an economic purpose.[48]

The country's economy improved significantly following a rapid rise in the demand for coffee in Britain and Western Europe in the 1840s. By 1846, there were more than 500 coffee plantations in Sri Lanka, mostly in the central Kandyan provinces.[49] The local Kandyan population refused to work on the plantations, so British planters became dependant on Indian immigrants for their labor force.[50] The migrants were largely a transient population that returned to India following coffee-picking season.[51] After the decline of the coffee industry in Sri Lanka, tea, rubber, and coconut emerged as the major plantation crops.[52] The tea industry was labor-intensive work that required year-around labor and resulted in a large permanent Indian labor-force taking root in the central highlands at the end of the nineteenth century.[53] Indian Tamil immigrants, numbering 900,000 by the mid-twentieth century, became contentious during the post-independence era as society divided along ethno-linguistic lines, and they were increasingly seen as an imperial vestige with no indigenous roots.

The last quarter of the nineteenth century yielded further changes to the social order through religion and education. Marginalization of majority communities was a

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[47] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 340.

[48] Ibid., 347.

[49] Ibid., 343.

[50] Ibid., 349.

[51] Ibid., 350.

[52] Ibid., 366.

[53] Ibid., 370.

typical tactic in Britain's divide-and-rule policies. "Under British colonial domination, non-Buddhists and ethnic minorities became disproportionately over-represented in the bureaucracy, civil service, and primary and secondary educational institutions."[54] In addition, education in English provided Sri Lankans a path to service in the colonial bureaucracy.[55] English education, however, was almost exclusively associated with Christian missions.[56] Rejection of these missionary efforts by much of the Sinhalese Buddhist population resulted in scant English educational opportunities in their communities.[57] The Tamil elite, on the other hand, had been eager consumers of education, even though they largely passed on the Christianity.[58] As a result, literacy in English was higher in Jaffna than any other area of Sri Lanka.[59] Tamils leveraged the knowledge and linguistic skills to attain professional and civil service employment and generally advance their social status.[60] Many educated Tamils emigrated from Jaffna to Colombo for employment.[61] This disproportionate representation in the professions, the civil service, and in educational institutions later caused the Sinhalese majority to enact discriminatory policies.

D. POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE

The Ceylon Legislative Council formed in 1833 to advise the Colonial Office on conditions within the colony.[62] The colonial governor appointed three non-British unofficial representatives to the Legislative Council—one Low-Country Sinhala, one Burgher, and one Tamil.[63] In 1889, the Kandyan and Moor communities were added as

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[54] Michael E. Brown, ed., *Fighting Words: Language Policy and Ethnic Relations in Asia* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2003), 113.

[55] DeVotta, *Illiberalism and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka*, 84.

[56] Ibid., 417.

[57] Ibid., 428.

[58] Ibid., 442.

[59] Ibid., 462.

[60] Ibid., 443.

[61] Ibid., 463.

[62] Ibid., 448.

[63] Jonathan Spencer, *Sri Lanka: History and the Roots of Conflict* (London England; New York: Routledge, 1990), 28.

representatives to the Legislative Council. The system evolved further into an electoral process with territorial representation by 1923. "Out of 37 unofficial members, 23 were to be elected to represent territorial constituencies, while 11 would be elected to represent specifically created communal electorates."[64] The remaining three were nominated. As the power of the Council increased and self-rule became an issue in Sri Lanka, minorities continued to lobby for a consociational system and later a federal governmental structure.[65]

General cooperation between the Sinhalese and Tamils characterized Ceylon's elite politics in the first two decades of the twentieth century.[66] Elite competition had more to do with caste rivalry among the Sinhalese than between the majority and minority groups.[67] This fundamentally changed after 1921, when Sri Lanka began to agitate for independence from Britain, and Tamils were viewed as a minority community, which resulted in ethnicity becoming a decisive factor in the competition for political and economic power.[68] An additional division emerged between the Kandyan and the low-country Sinhalese based on competition for resources and education.[69] For this reason, ethnicity became a source of tension to be manipulated by political elites.

In early 1927, the Donoughmore Commission was appointed to review the constitution of the colony of Sri Lanka.[70] Contrary to the expectations of the Ceylon National Congress (a Sinhalese political association), the commission did not recommend Sri Lanka be given the responsibility of self-governance but instead called for a semi-responsible local State Council answerable to a powerful colonial governor.[71] Additionally, the commission recommended a widening of the franchise from a small percentage of the elite community to include all males and females over the age of

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[64] Spencer, *Sri Lanka: History and the Roots of Conflict*, 29.

[65] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 491.

[66] Ibid., 480.

[67] Ibid., 483.

[68] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 32.

[69] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 486.

[70] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 32.

[71] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 521.

twenty-one.[72] Equally important, all provisions for communal representation were dropped. Minorities feared that universal suffrage and lack of communal representation would result in domination of the electorate by the Sinhalese and no protections of minority rights.[73] By adopting a structure that allowed for majority domination with little or no protection for minorities, ethnic tensions became a staple of Sri Lankan politics.[74] Despite the many concerns, the constitutional reforms outlined in the Donoughmore Commission were implemented in 1931 with the expectation that full self-governance would soon follow.[75] Universal suffrage provided the means for elites to promote an exclusive form of Sinhalese nationalism. In the following decades, the decisive nature of this system became evident as political elites used ethnicity to consolidate their power.

The Second World War delayed constitutional reforms for self-governance. It was not until 1945 that Sri Lankan politicians continued their campaign to lobby Britain for reforms.[76] The British government yielded to their requests on 18 June 1947 by announcing that Sri Lanka would receive "fully responsible status within the British Commonwealth of Nations" in February 1948.[77] The new constitution, based on recommendations from the Soulbury Commission, provided Sri Lanka with full sovereignty in matters of internal affairs but obligated Britain to handle external affairs and defense.[78] It was not until 1957, when Britain's decline was evident, that military and naval bases transferred to Sri Lanka.[79]

The new constitution also included provisions preventing discriminatory legislation against minorities.[80] However, the provisions did not apply to Indian Tamils

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[72] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 32.

[73] Ibid., 32.

[74] DeVotta, *Illiberalism and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka*, 85.

[75] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 527.

[76] Ibid., 561.

[77] Ibid., 569.

[78] Ibid., 561.

[79] Ibid., 636.

[80] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 180.

who were considered an "unassimilated group without roots in society."[81] The Citizenship Act of 1948, the Indian and Pakistani Act of 1949, and the Parliamentary Elections Act of 1949 deprived Indian Tamils of their citizenship rights and franchise in Sri Lanka. If Indian Tamils had been granted citizenship and the franchise, then they would have become the dominant group in the central highlands, thereby limiting the influence of Kandyan Sinhalese.[82] Instead, the Indian Tamils lost seven seats in the legislature.[83] The Indian Tamils' fate was finalized in a 1964 agreement with India that allowed the "repatriation over a fifteen-year period of 525,000 Indian residents in Sri Lanka to India, along with their natural increase, and the absorption of 300,000 as citizens of Sri Lanka."[84] The remaining population of 150,000 Indian Tamils' future remained in limbo.

E. FROM POLITICS TO CIVIL WAR

The Sri Lankan Freedom Party (SLFP) was formed in 1951, when S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike broke away from the ruling United National Party (UNP).[85] The SLFP was sympathetic to the religious, linguistic, and cultural issues raised by an emergent group of Buddhist activists. The Sinhala-educated intelligentsia was upset by the opportunities that were closed to them by the English-language dominance in government administration.[86] They felt that Tamils had a disproportionate share of professional and civil service employment along with better educational opportunities.[87] The Buddhists also believed that their religion and culture were not elevated to the proper position within Sri Lanka.[88]

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[81] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 602.

[82] Ibid., 605.

[83] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 182.

[84] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 648.

[85] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 182.

[86] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 613.

[87] Sankaran Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), 51.

[88] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 613.

The SLFP took the opportunity to rally Buddhist nationalism around the 2500th anniversary of the *parinibbana* (death) of the Buddha in 1956. This year also coincided with the general elections on the island. The movement used language (Sinhala) as the basis to stir nationalism, since Buddhism and Sinhala were so deeply intertwined.[89] The ethnic mobilization that resulted came not only from the *bhikkus* (Buddhist monks) but also from Sinhalese of all classes of society.[90] It evoked a profound response in the Sinhalese working class, peasantry, and Sinhalese elite alike.[91] As Sinhalese political groups began to compete for votes, they tried to outbid each other to the detriment of the Sri Lankan Tamils.[92] The elites appealed to ethno-linguistic policies that would elevate Sinhalese socioeconomic status while depriving and marginalizing Tamils.[93] The tables swiftly turned on the Sinhalese elite as various Buddhist groups began dominating the political agenda. "Buddhist fronts and societies of various types were activated and mobilized on short notice to obstruct any Sinhala government preparing to make concessions to the Tamils."[94] Sinhalese nationalist pressure undermined accommodation of minority concerns.

A coalition of the SLFP and two smaller Sinhalese parties successfully defeated the UNP in the 1956 elections, marking the country's first transfer of power since independence in 1948. The SLFP would dominate politics over the next two decades. The 1956 elections marked the end of multiethnic politics in Sri Lanka and the beginning of a more democratic and populist form of government centered on linguistic nationalism. "In Sinhala, the words for nation, race and people are practically synonymous and a multiracial or multi-communal nation or state is incomprehensible to the popular mind."[95] In response, Tamil minorities began to agitate at the exclusive national claims of the Sinhalese. The Federal Party (a Tamil political association)

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[89] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 614.

[90] Ibid., 616.

[91] Ibid., 634.

[92] DeVotta, *Illiberalism and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka*, 88.

[93] Brown, *Fighting Words: Language Policy and Ethnic Relations in Asia*, 106.

[94] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 176.

[95] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 617.

asserted, "the Tamil-speaking people in Ceylon constituted a nation distinct from that of the Sinhalese by every fundamental test of nationhood, and in particular stressed the separate historical past of the Tamils and their linguistic unity and distinctiveness."[96] The 1956 general elections proved to be the beginning of a series of events and policies that divide the country on an ethno-linguistic basis.

Soon after taking office, the SLFP coalition government under Prime Minister Bandaranaike pushed through the Sinhala Only Act of 1956. The act established Sinhala as the only official language of the island.[97] During the same period, the Tamil Federal Party, recognizing the dwindling position of Tamils in Sri Lankan society, began to vie for recognition of Tamil as an official language and more autonomy in the Northern and Eastern provinces under a federal constitution. With their declining influence, Tamils had little success other than a compromise reached in 1958 allowing Tamil to be used for administrative purposes in the Northern and Eastern provinces.[98]

The language legislation had a dramatic effect on Tamil employment. By replacing English with Sinhala as the official language, employment and education opportunities opened for millions of Sinhalese while at the same time excluding Tamils.[99] "From 1956 to 1970, the proportions of Tamils employed by the state fell from 60 to 10 percent in the professions, from 30 to 5 percent in the administrative services, from 50 to 5 percent in the clerical service, and from 40 to 1 percent in the armed forces."[100] Sinhalese linguistic nationalism bridged class divisions and dampened intra-Sinhalese divisions producing a profound unity among the diverse Sinhalese population, while suppressing and alienating Tamils.[101]

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[96] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 626.

[97] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 183.

[98] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 629.

[99] Robert I. Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation* (Cambridge, Mass; Washington, D.C.: World Peace Foundation and Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs; Brookings Institution Press, 1999), 48.

[100] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka*, 6.

[101] Brown, *Fighting Words: Language Policy and Ethnic Relations in Asia*, 121.

An SLFP coalition again won the 1970 general elections with a large parliamentary majority that gave the government substantial power. Their power, however, could not quell the discontent youth of the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). In 1971, this Marxist-nationalist group staged a violent insurrection against the government. The rebellion was short-lived, but it had a dramatic effect in the coming years and provided a basis to change the country's political structure. A new constitution approved in May 1972 provided more control to the central government. The new structure consisted of a unicameral republican system with the National State Assembly as the main instrument of power. A strong executive was established with few checks on his powers. These changes were meant to strengthen the executive to deal with insurgencies; however, they also limited the freedom of the press and political opposition.[102]

The 1972 constitution also instilled further divisions between the Sinhalese and the minorities. First, the constitution professed "the Republic of Sri Lanka shall give to Buddhism the foremost place and accordingly it shall be the duty of the state to protect and foster Buddhism."[103] Moreover, Sinhala was reiterated as the official state language. To make matters worse, the government introduced legislation in 1970 that made university admission less dependent on academic ability and more dependent on ensuring Sinhalese had their proportion of higher education.[104] As a result, Tamil students had to far exceed their Sinhalese counterparts in university entrance examinations for degrees in medicine, engineering, and sciences.[105] Consequently, high unemployment (43 percent) among the Tamil youth by the mid-1970s paved the way for a militant youth movement.[106]

For the first time in the country's history, these discriminatory policies had the effect of uniting the Tamil speaking population of Sri Lanka. Tamil political parties

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[102] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 669.

[103] Ibid., 673.

[104] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation*, 110.

[105] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 76.

[106] Ibid.

represented by the Federal Party, the Tamil Congress, the Ceylon Workers' Congress (representing Indian Tamils), and other Tamil politicians all united under the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) in 1976.[107] The systematic alienation of Tamil minorities by the Sinhalese was the central factor in the creation of a defensive Tamil nationalism. The security dilemma produced by Sinhalese shaped the environment in which Tamils, under the TULF, would vie for a separate state in the Tamil homeland (Eelam) of the Northern and Eastern provinces.

Although the constitution was revised again in 1977 after the UNP returned to power, the concessions made to minorities came too late, following decades of discriminatory policies. TULF mobilization of the radicalized youth only briefly preceded the death of the top three Tamil political leaders in 1977.[108] The secessionist movement quickly took on a life of its own. By the early 1980s, the youth groups became powerful but fractionalized organizations that saw violence as their means of attaining a separate Tamil state.[109] Roles quickly reversed as militant youth groups began to control the agenda of TULF politicians.[110] They regarded the political history of continued deprivation of Tamil rights as a failed path and the only way forward required the fight for a sovereign Tamil Eelam.[111]

Deteriorating relations between Sinhalese and Tamils continued as violent anti-Tamil riots took place in 1977 and 1981 with the apparent support of the government.[112] The violence in 1981 during District Development Council elections in Jaffna led to the destruction of the Jaffna Municipal Library. Tamils believed that the act was an attempt by the Sinhalese to destroy Tamil culture—nearly 100,000 ancient and rare documents had been contained in the library.[113] Several Tamil militant groups appeared during this

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[107] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 674.

[108] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 77.

[109] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 694.

[110] Ibid., 693.

[111] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 77.

[112] DeVotta, *Illiberalism and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka*, 90.

[113] Brown, *Fighting Words: Language Policy and Ethnic Relations in Asia*, 135.

period, including the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF), the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO), the People's Liberation Organization for Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), and the Eelam Revolutionary Organization of Students (EROS).[114] The militants were responsible for the assassination of politicians, soldiers, and police along with bank robberies and attacks on government facilities.[115] From this point, events dramatically escalated from low-level violence and criminal activity to a full-scale civil war in July 1983.

In the months leading up to July 1983, there were a series of confrontations between Tamil militant groups and Sri Lankan forces. Then, on July 23, a truck carrying thirteen Sri Lankan Army soldiers, all Sinhalese, were killed as they hit a landmine in Jaffna. As crowds grew in Colombo, while awaiting the arrival of the bodies for a burial ceremony, Sinhalese politicians agitated the procession into an angry mob. Anti-Tamil rhetoric and pro-Sinhalese chauvinism increasingly grew out of control of the political elite. That evening it was announced that the funeral was cancelled and the bodies were to be sent directly to their home villages.[116] The crowd quickly turned from ceremonial grievance to violent revenge against Tamils. The next four days produced the worst anti-Tamil violence in the island's history. The events became known as "Black July."

The violence had a devastating effect on the Tamil population; between 2,000 to 3,000 Tamils were killed, arson and looting of Tamil property in Colombo produced an estimated $300 million in damage, and 70 percent of Tamils in Colombo were forced into refugee camps.[117] In Colombo, 100,000 Tamils were homeless and in the rest of the country another 175,000 were forced from their homes.[118] The more privileged Tamils fled Sri Lanka for Western countries, Southeast Asia and Australia. Tens of thousands more fled across the Palk Strait to India.[119]

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[114] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 109.

[115] Ibid., 109.

[116] Ibid., 115.

[117] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 116.

[118] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation*, 7.

[119] Ibid.

The "Black July" riots mark the beginning of the Sri Lankan civil war between the Sinhalese and Tamils. The government response to the riots was non-existent, if not contributory. It took the government "twenty-four hours to declare a curfew, three days to ensure the curfew was effective, and four days" for the president to address the nation.[120] When Jayewardene did address the nation, he demanded "national respect of the Sinhalese people" and failed to mention the murder of thousands of Tamils or the fact that most of Colombo's Tamils were in refugee camps.[121] The weak state response to the riots provided the trigger that launched Sri Lanka into a violent conflict that would last nearly twenty-six years.

F. CONCLUSION

A series of factors explain the underlying causes of violent ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. First, British colonialism united the entire island under a single administration. Roads and railways were constructed on the island, which linked people that previously had rare occasion to encounter each other. Increased communication of diverse groups with different languages, religions, and cultures inherently increased the chance for conflict.[122] Additionally, colonial legacy was seen as critical in the "elevation of outsider minorities to a disproportionately large presence in the economy, the bureaucracy, and other positions of power and prestige."[123] Britain's divide-and-rule policies placed Tamils in a "minority management" position. With disproportionate employment and educational opportunities, the Sinhalese majority was set on regaining dominate influence upon independence. In addition, Buddhist outrage over the historical injustices suffered by their religion while under colonial rule provided a sense of unity among various groups of Sinhalese.[124]

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[120] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 116.

[121] Ibid., 116.

[122] See Brown "Ethnic and Internal Conflict" for more information on ethnic conflict in multiethnic societies. Chester A. Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela R. Aall, *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflict* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001), 894.

[123] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 57.

[124] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 177.

Elites used Sinhalese history, as described in the *Mahavamsa*, to "fashion a national ideology that promoted the belief that Sri Lanka was *Sihidipa* (the island of the Sinhalese) and *Dhammadipa* (the island chosen to preserve and propagate Buddhism)."[125] Sri Lanka was seen as the only home of Sinhalese left in the world, whereas Tamils could always go to Tamil Nadu in India.[126] Universal suffrage provided the Sinhalese majority an opportunity to dominate the political environment. The temptation to mobilize a large majority of the population along ethno-linguistic divisions was too alluring for political elite to resist.[127] Consequently, divisions began to take root in the society and later became salient when language developed into the basis for nationalism and ethnic mobilization.

Sinhalese elite also began alienating the Tamil community by creating the perception of a security dilemma based on ethno-linguistic divisions.[128] Even though Sinhalese constituted a near three-quarter majority on the island, their ethno-linguistic association of the fifty-five million Tamils in India with the less than four million in Sri Lanka created a threat that could be manipulated.[129] They used the island's pre-colonial history, as documented in the Mahavamsa, to create a fear of invading Tamils from India.[130] By associating that fear with Sri Lankan Tamils, Sinhalese elite effectively created a minority complex for their majority community.

Defensive Tamil nationalism resulted from a reluctant transition from politics to a separatist movement. The Sinhalese sought to transform Sri Lanka into a Sinhalese state by either assimilating Tamils or forcing them to leave for India, which many did after 1948 Independence was followed by a dismantling of Tamil rights. Discriminatory language policies generated high unemployment and few educational opportunities,

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[125] Brown, *Fighting Words: Language Policy and Ethnic Relations in Asia*, 112.

[126] Coakley, *The Territorial Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 177.

[127] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 68.

[128] See Lake and Rothchild for more information on how state weakness leads to a security dilemma and ultimately ethnic conflict. David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild, "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict," *International Security* 21, no. 2 (Autumn, 1996), 41–75, http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.nps.edu/stable/2539070 (accessed 02/10/2010).

[129] De Silva, *A History of Sri Lanka*, 629.

[130] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation*, 48.

combined with state-sponsorship of Buddhism, produced a unitary state that largely excluded Sri Lankan Tamils.[131] To make matters worse, peaceful demonstrations by Tamils to discriminatory legislation resulted in anti-Tamil riots in 1956, 1958, 1977, 1981, and the worst of all in 1983.[132] Escalating discrimination and violence against Tamils produced a security dilemma[133] uniting Tamils under a secessionist agenda claiming a traditional Tamil homeland in the Northern and Eastern provinces.[134] As Tamil political leadership began to die-off, particularly in 1977, the radical unemployed youth began to lead the Tamil separatist cause in a more militant direction. The institutional failure of the state to respond to the events of "Black July" proved to be the tipping point that thrust the country into all-out civil war.[135]

[131] See Van Evera for more information on how the level of respect of minority rights will affect the possibility for violent ethnic conflict. Stephen van Evera, "Hypotheses on Nationalism and War," *International Security* 18, no. 4 (Spring, 1994), 5–39, http://www.jstor.org.libproxy.nps.edu/stable/2539176.

[132] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 67.

[133] See Lake and Rothchild for more information on security dilemmas. Lake and Rothchild, *Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict*, 52.

[134] See Toft for more information on ethnic minority claims to territory and state views that territory is indivisible. Monica Duffy Toft, *Indivisible Territory and Ethnic War* (Cambridge, Mass: Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Harvard University, 2001), 46.

[135] See Hardin, pg 155 for more information on tipping phenomenon. Russell Hardin, *One for all: The Logic of Group Conflict* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 155.

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III. OSCILLATING BETWEEN WAR AND PEACE

A. INTRODUCTION

The decades that follow the 1983 riots oscillate between war and peace with domestic and international attempts to resolve the violent conflict. The Indo-Sri Lankan Accord, signed in 1987, provided the framework for direct Indian intervention with an Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF). After thirty-two months attempting to restore peace in Sri Lanka, India withdrew its last soldiers in March 1990. The election of Sri Lankan President Chandrika Kumaratunga in 1994 led to a domestic peace initiative. In less than a year, negotiations between the GoSL and LTTE broke down and the country resumed its war. In 2002, a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire agreement was signed by the GoSL and LTTE. Relative peace lasted in Sri Lanka for more than four years. Yet in mid-2006, the country again slipped back into violent conflict. This chapter will illustrate how both the GoSL and the Tamil militants used the breaks in fighting to regroup and rearm, inevitably extending the conflict.

B. EELAM I: THE BEGINNING OF THE CIVIL WAR

The institutional failure of the state to respond to the events of "Black July" proved to be the tipping point that thrust the country into all-out civil war.[136] India saw the violent riots as an opportunity to intervene in Sri Lankan affairs.[137] There was broad outrage over the ethnic violence against Tamils, particularly among the Tamils in India. There were also refugees streaming across the Palk Strait into India in the tens of thousands. Upper-class Tamils were not exempt from the violent discrimination in Sri Lanka.[138] They were able to garner wide international political support and attention for their cause. Western countries were reluctant to get involved however; instead, they looked to India as a regional power to settle the matter. India's intervention took two

[136] See Hardin for more information on tipping phenomenon. Russell Hardin, *One for all: The Logic of Group Conflict* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995), 155.

[137] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 118.

[138] Ibid., 118.

paths: an overt path that mediated between the GoSL and the Tamil groups, and a covert path of arming and training Tamil militants through its external intelligence agency, the Research and Analysis Wing (RAW).[139] The seemingly inconsistent paths were meant to strengthen India's ability to extract concessions from the GoSL in order to negotiate a settlement.[140]

Eelam I, as the first civil war period became known, was characterized by Tamil militant groups making significant gains against the Sri Lankan military. They began taking control of large portions of northern and eastern Sri Lanka. More than twenty organizations made up the militant movement, with membership numbering more than 10,000 at the time, and were formed with the agenda of creating a separate Tamil state called Eelam.[141] Many of the groups were trained and equipped in southern India (Tamil Nadu) by RAW.[142] An estimated twelve hundred Tamil militants trained on Indian soil between September 1983 and July 1987.[143] They were trained in the use of "automatic and semi-automatic weapons, self-loading rifles, 84mm rocket launchers, heavy weapons, and in laying mines, map reading, guerilla war, mountaineering, demolitions and anti-tank warfare while selected cadres from some groups were given training in diving and underwater sabotage."[144] The advanced training, equipment, and improved tactics proved to be very effective against the Sri Lankan Army until infighting between militants groups in 1986.[145]

RAW's control of the militant groups progressively declined after 1984, particularly with the LTTE. The LTTE did not want to tie its hands by depending solely

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[139] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 119.

[140] Ibid., 122.

[141] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 73.

[142] A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, *The Break-Up of Sri Lanka: The Sinhalese-Tamil Conflict* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1988), 204.

[143] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 123.

[144] M. R. Narayan Swamy, *Tigers of Lanka, from Boys to Guerrillas* (Delhi: Konark Publishers, 1994), 110.

[145] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 74.

on India for funding, arming, and training to support its secessionist cause.[146] Additionally, the LTTE did not wish for India to have undue influence over them. In February 1986, the LTTE separated itself from RAW and began eliminating rival Tamil militant groups.[147] Hundreds of Tamil Eelam Liberation Organization (TELO) members were killed during a one-week period in mid-1986 and by the year's end, more than one hundred members of Eelam People's Liberation Front (EPRLF) were also killed.[148] India's support of Tamil militants backfired and would latter hinder their efforts to disarm and disband these groups.

The Sri Lankan Army began the civil war poorly armed and trained. Most came from peasant families and had little discipline or will to fight.[149] By the end of 1985, the Sri Lankan military became better trained and equipped to handle the Tamil militants:

> The Sri Lankan government had gradually built up its force in 1985 by purchasing new helicopter gunships, light aircraft, gunboats, new armored personnel carriers, small arms, and artillery from Pakistan, Israel and South Africa. Government forces were also trained by SAS British mercenaries, the Israeli Secret Service, and Pakistani military personnel in guerrilla tactics to fight Tamil militants and to fly helicopter gunships and light aircraft.[150]

Following an embargo imposed on the Jaffna peninsula of fuel, food, and medical supplies, the Sri Lankan Army launched an offensive against the militants in January 1987.[151] By March, the militants were retreating from their camps and outposts and consolidating in Jaffna.[152] India put considerable pressure on Sri Lanka to return to negotiations for a political solution. As a result, Sri Lanka declared, what turned out to be, a short-lived ceasefire. On April 17, 1987, Tamil militants gunned down 125 Sinhalese civilians near Trincomalee followed by another hundred when a bomb

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[146] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 126.

[147] Ibid., 137.

[148] Ibid., 137, 142.

[149] Wilson, *The Break-Up of Sri Lanka: The Sinhalese-Tamil Conflict*, 178.

[150] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 167.

[151] Ibid., 182.

[152] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 148.

exploded in a Colombo bus station. The GoSL rebuffed India's pressure and resumed its military offensive on May 26 with Operation Liberation. A series of victories put the momentum on the side of the Sri Lankan Army as they surrounded Jaffna.[153] While the army was poised to take the Jaffna peninsula, India stepped in again over concerns of civilian Tamil casualties. In early June, they announced their intent on delivering humanitarian supplies to Jaffna through the Red Cross. On June 4, Indian fishing boats, under ICRC auspices, carrying the supplies were forced to return to India by the Sri Lankan Navy. The next day, India air-dropped twenty-five tons of food and supplies over Jaffna.[154] The bold move by India was effective at convincing the GoSL that Indian intervention was imminent. The Sri Lankan military halted their offensive and in less than two months signed the Indo-Sri Lankan Agreement (ISLA) of July 1987.[155]

C. INDIAN INTERVENTION

The ISLA included measures to devolve administrative power to the provinces in order to address Tamil grievances. In return, Tamil militants (through separate negotiations with India) agreed to disarm and disband. V. Prabhakaran, founder and leader of the LTTE, was personally assured by the Prime Minister of India that Tamils would be protected if they agreed to disarm and disband. Within a day of the signing of the agreement, the India Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) deployed to Sri Lanka to oversee the implementation of the provisions. Their reputation for impartiality quickly became tainted following revelations of abuse against the Tamil population. The Indian Army was commonly cited committing human rights violations such as rape and torture. In addition, soon after arriving in Sri Lanka to disarm and disband Tamil militants, the IPKF launched an operation to destroy the operational headquarters of the LTTE in Jaffna using a force of 103 paratroopers. The operation failed miserably with the loss of more than sixty Indian soldiers but no losses on the Tamil militant side. This incident proved to be a severe embarrassment in India. The weak consent for Indian intervention by the

[153] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 149.

[154] Manogaran, *Ethnic Conflict and Reconciliation in Sri Lanka*, 183.

[155] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 156.

Tamils quickly turned to all-out disapproval. The LTTE immediately broke with the provisions and temporarily turned their fight to the IPKF. The IPKF entered Sri Lanka as a peacekeeping force with a limited set of responsibilities. Within a short time, their role evolved to a complex counterinsurgency, due in part to their own neglect and lack of experience.[156]

By October 1987, the IPKF was conducting operations to take the Jaffna peninsula by force. Ironically, they were conducting the same operations that they were sent there to stop the Sri Lanka military from doing. The operation was costly for the IPKF. During the October and November assault alone, they lost 262 soldiers. The LTTE disappeared into the swamps and jungles of the Vanni and began to launch a guerrilla war against the IPKF. The Indian army became indiscriminate in their operations, resulting in high civilian casualties.[157]

Although the GoSL was also discontent with the Indian intervention, they were able to capitalize on IPKF assistance in the north by diverting the Sri Lankan military to respond to a Marxist-nationalist insurgency by the Janata Vimukti Peramuna (JVP) in the south. Once the JVP insurgency was contained, the Sinhalese majority put pressure on Sri Lankan President to expel the IPKF. India ignored the GoSL demands for the IPKF to leave. The newly elected Sri Lankan President responded by providing arms to the LTTE to assist their efforts to drive out the Indian forces. By March 1990, a humiliated Indian military finally conceded and left the island of Sri Lanka after losing more than 1,100 of its soldiers. Within hours of the IPKF leaving Sri Lanka, the LTTE was in firm control of the Northern and Eastern provinces after other militant groups dissolved or fled the island.[158]

The collusion between the GoSL and the LTTE to expel the IPKF did not bring increased cooperation between the two foes. Following the departure of the IPKF, the civil war resumed more intense than before the Indian intervention. The LTTE emerged

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[156] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 172–190.

[157] Ibid., 192.

[158] Ibid., 203.

as the dominant Tamil militant group with a significantly increased capability to conduct guerrilla and even conventional warfare.[159] The Sri Lankan military also swelled its ranks and increased its capability through the purchase of military equipment from countries such as China and Pakistan.[160] Both the GoSL and the Tamil militants (now consolidated under the LTTE) used the break in fighting to strengthen their position to wage war against the other.

D. EELAM II: A RETURN TO WAR

With India's departure, the LTTE resumed its campaign of Tamil Eelam. Between June 1990 and the end of 1993, the LTTE consolidated its hold on the Tamil homeland in the north and east. They established an arms smuggling network in Southeast Asia that provided them with heavy machine guns, surface-to-air missiles, pressure mines, naval equipment and communications.[161] The extensive Tamil diaspora provided funding for costly military equipment. In addition to developing the ability to conduct conventional operations and improving its guerrilla operations, the LTTE also realized the importance of a naval capability.[162] They began attacking troop carriers and supply ships that were transiting to and from the Sri Lankan Army's isolated bases on the Jaffna Peninsula. The attacks had a debilitating impact on the Army's ability to conduct operations by severing supply lines and lowering morale. By the end of Eelam II, the LTTE had built its force to approximately 16,000 personnel.[163]

In the early 1990s, the LTTE also conducted a series of assassinations against threats to the organization and those that insulted its leader. The first on the list was Sri

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[159] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation*, 218.

[160] K. Alan Kronstadt, *Sri Lanka: Background and U.S. Relations* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2007)

[161] Chris Smith, *In the Shadow of a Ceasefire: The Impacts of Small Arms Availability and Misuse in Sri Lanka*, Small Arms Survey, 2003), http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/sas008/sas008.pdf (accessed 02/14/2010).

[162] Chris Smith, "The Eelam Endgame?" *International Affairs* 83, no. 1 (Jan, 2007), 69, http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1206673171&Fmt=7&clientId=11969&RQT=309&VName=PQD (accessed 2/09/2009).

[163] Tim Pippard and Chanel White, "JTIC Country Briefing: Sri Lanka," *Jane's* (01 April, 2008), http://search.janes.com.libproxy.nps.edu (accessed 09/04/2009).

Lanka's defense minister, Ranajan Wejeratne. He led the effort to defeat the JVP and was planning the war against the LTTE. He was blown up in March 1991 as he was driving to work in his armor-plated Mercedes.[164] Next, the former Prime Minister of India, Rajiv Gandhi, was killed by a suicide bomber as he was campaigning just outside of Madras.[165] A month later, a bomb destroyed the Sri Lankan Army headquarters in Colombo, and in August 1992 most of the Army's top leadership were killed on Kayts Island off the coast of Jaffna.[166] In April 1993, Sri Lanka's first National Security Minister, Lalith Athulathmudali, was killed by a gunman in Colombo. He was responsible for the near defeat of the Tamil militants prior to Indian intervention.[167] A week later, Sri Lanka's President, Ranasinghe Premadasa, was killed by a suicide bomber while the president was attending an election rally.[168] Numerous other assassinations and killings took place. Although Eelam II can be characterized as a one-sided victory by the LTTE, their one flaw was killing the Indian Prime Minister.[169] This strategic mistake cost the LTTE many of its tentative allies in southern India.[170]

E. KUMARATUNGA'S PEACE INITIATIVE (1994–95)

With the LTTE now challenging the Sri Lankan Army military head on, the civil war quickly turned into a "hurting stalemate." The 1994 presidential and parliamentary elections produced a change of power as President Chandrika Kumaratunga took control of the country by campaigning on a peace platform. Upon taking office, Kumaratunga put together a four-person team that would negotiate directly with the LTTE. The negotiations were backed up with a set of constitutional proposals meant to restore confidence to the minorities. During the first round of talks, the team was received in

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[164] Nitin A. Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace* (New Delhi: Har-Anand Publications, 2009), 77.

[165] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 215.

[166] Ibid., 215.

[167] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 77.

[168] Krishna, *Postcolonial Insecurities: India, Sri Lanka, and the Question of Nationhood*, 215.

[169] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 78.

[170] Ibid., 78.

Jaffna with "flower pedals and wild popular enthusiasm."[171] As the months passed, the negotiations quickly broke down. By April 1995, "the ceasefire and negotiations crashed when the LTTE resumed the battle by blowing up two Sri Lankan naval craft and, within the next five days, downing two Sri Lankan air force planes."[172] After Kumaratunga's peace initiative was rejected by the LTTE, she pledged to use "any and all means" to bring the war to a successful conclusion.[173] She put forth a massive increase in defense spending that facilitated the purchase of weapons and equipment from China, Russia, and Israel.[174] With the increased military capability, the Sri Lankan Army was again ready to engage the LTTE. Over the next five years a "war for peace" strategy was adopted in which constitutional devolution of power was accompanied by an aggressive military offensive against the LTTE in order to force them to negotiate after the war was won.[175]

F. EELAM III: A WAR FOR PEACE

The Sri Lankan Army launched Operation Riviresa in October 1995. It took only forty-eight days for the major military offensive to successfully bring Jaffna back under government control for the first time in ten years.[176] Successive iterations of Operation Riviresa resulted in the entire Jaffna Peninsula reverting to government control by mid-1996.[177] The LTTE essentially disappeared before the army arrived, leaving only the sick and elderly behind. As the army turned its attention to the LTTE strongholds in the eastern province, the LTTE again faded into the jungles and swamps.[178]

The LTTE continued its campaign of assassinations and bombings while planning a major operation against Sri Lankan Army forces in the northern and eastern provinces. They began by launching an attack on an army base in Mullaitivu, "killing an estimated

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[171] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation*, 131–133.

[172] Ibid., 132.

[173] Ibid., 27.

[174] Ibid., 27.

[175] John Stephen Moolakkattu, "Peace Facilitation by Small States: Norway in Sri Lanka," *Cooperation and Conflict* 40, no. 4 (December 1, 2005), 389.

[176] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation*, 27.

[177] Ibid., 28.

[178] Ibid., 27.

1,200 soldiers and capturing large amounts of defense hardware, including armored personnel carriers, four 120mm artillery pieces, and night-vision and surveillance equipment only recently acquired from abroad."[179] Now, as the LTTE regrouped and acquired a significant cache of weapons and equipment, the initiative began to alternate between the two foes. The Sri Lankan Army still had not attained secure lines of communication between Colombo and Jaffna. They remained dependent on the Sri Lankan Navy to transport troops and supplies. By November 1999, the LTTE controlled most of the Vanni (the area south of Jaffna) and by April 2000, it controlled the strategically important Elephant Pass (one of only two land routes into the Jaffna Peninsula).[180] The Sri Lankan Army was left isolated, with limited control of High Security Zones in Jaffna. A December 1999 assassination attempt of President Kumaratunga left her blind in one eye and badly wounded. As the costs of war escalated on both sides, neither able to decisively defeat the other, the conflict again fell into a "hurting stalemate." In late 2001, the LTTE announced a ceasefire that culminated in a Norwegian-brokered ceasefire agreement between the LTTE and the GoSL in February 2002.[181]

G. NORWAY STEPS IN: THE 2002 CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

The ceasefire agreement between the GoSL and the LTTE included provisions for an international monitoring mission led by Norway.[182] The Sri Lankan Monitoring Mission (SLMM), as it became known, was created to conduct on-site monitoring to ensure the commitments made in the ceasefire agreement were abided by.[183] Additionally, Norway assumed the responsibility as facilitator of the peace talks. Each role required neutrality to be maintained yet both the SLMM and the Norwegian facilitators were criticized for their impartiality. President Kumaratunga felt that the

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[179] Rotberg, *Creating Peace in Sri Lanka: Civil War and Reconciliation*, 28.

[180] W. Nieto, "A War of Attrition: Sri Lanka and the Tamil Tigers," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 19, no. 4 (December 2008), 580, http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1634928081&Fmt=7&clientId=11969&RQT=309&VName=PQD.

[181] Ibid., 580.

[182] Moolakkattu, *Peace Facilitation by Small States: Norway in Sri Lanka*, 391.

[183] Ibid., 391.

monitoring mission compromised Sri Lanka's sovereignty. Sinhalese nationalists saw Norwegian involvement as a "continuation of imperialist designs."[184] The president called for the replacement of the chief of the SLMM at the end of 2003 after allegations that he leaked national security information about an LTTE smuggling vessel. Human rights groups also criticized Norway's impartiality. They claimed that the LTTE were recruiting child soldiers and attacking opposition Tamil organizations as Norway was looking the other way.[185] Norway progressively became less effective at facilitating peace talks and their remaining role as monitors had no enforcement power.

From February 2002 to April 2003, the LTTE and GoSL held six rounds of face-to-face Norway-facilitated peace negotiations. Both sides quickly became frustrated with the process as each was reluctant to make concessions. President Kumaratunga felt that the ceasefire and peace talks provided the LTTE an opportunity to set up a "de facto independent state in the northeastern province of Sri Lanka."[186] The LTTE became upset as the GoSL refused to pull the Sri Lankan Army from the High Security Zones in Jaffna.[187] Frustrated, the LTTE hastily walked out of the peace talks in April 2003. By the end of the year, there were serious doubts about the continued viability of the peace process.

It became clear that there was little faith in the peace negotiations by either side. The LTTE continued to rebuild its military and regularly violated the ceasefire agreement. They grew their ranks from 6,000 to 16,000 during the peace talks. The Sri Lankan military also recruited heavily during this period. In addition, a "large-scale

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[184] Moolakkattu, *Peace Facilitation by Small States: Norway in Sri Lanka*, 394.

[185] Ibid., 395.

[186] Rajat Ganguly, "Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict: At a Crossroad between Peace and War," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 5 (2004), 903–917, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3993700. 911, (accessed 2/20/2009).

[187] Ibid., 911.

modernization of the armed forces" was underway with the support of India and others.[188] The break in fighting appears to have only provided an opportunity for both sides to regroup and rearm.

September 2003 saw the inauguration of the Tamil Eelam Police headquarters in Kilinochchi by the LTTE Chief Prabhakaran. This was a clear indication that the LTTE was setting up institutions for a separate state. President Kumaratunga had severe reservations on concessions made to the LTTE by the rival United National Front (UNF) under Prime Minister Wickremesinghe. In November 2003, the President declared a state of emergency in the country "under which she suspended parliament and took control of the ministries of Defence, Interior and Media from the government."[189] Then, in February 2004, she dissolved parliament and set new elections for April as she formed a new alliance between her party (the Sri Lankan Freedom Party) and a left-wing Marxist-nationalist party, the Janatha Vimukti Peramuna (JVP). The SLFP-JVP alliance combined to form the United People's Freedom Alliance (UPFA). The UPFA came out ahead in the April elections with Mahinda Rajapakse leading the new parliament.[190] Just as the ruling government turned away from peace negotiations with the LTTE toward hard-line policies, cracks start to emerge in the LTTE organization.

The LTTE's eastern commander, Vinayagamoorthy Muralitharan or "Colonel Karuna," along with 6,000 of his fighters split from the LTTE in March 2004.[191] Colonel Karuna later explained his reason for defecting:

> My problem with Prabhakaran was mainly because of his rigid attitude. For two years since 2002 after LTTE acceded to the Norway-brokered Ceasefire, I was in the delegation that held negotiations all over the globe. During our interaction and travels, we had realized that the world was no longer tolerant of violence, even if it was for a good cause.

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[188] Rajat Ganguly, "Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict: At a Crossroad between Peace and War," *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 5 (2004), 903–917, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3993700., 911 (accessed 2/20/2009).

[189] Ganguly, "Sri Lanka's Ethnic Conflict," 912.

[190] Ibid., 914.

[191] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 23.

> In 2004, after I returned from Geneva, I went up to Prabhakaran and showed him a draft agreement proposed by the negotiators. One glance at it and he tore the draft and threw it in my face accusing me of betraying the Tamil cause.[192]

It quickly became apparent to Colonel Karuna that Prabhakaran never intended to negotiate a peaceful settlement with the GoSL. Karuna's faction negotiated a separate truce with the government and fought in cooperation with the Sri Lankan Army in addition to providing important strategic and tactical intelligence.[193] In addition to weakening the LTTE militarily, this proved to be critical blow to the LTTE's claim to be the only voice of the Tamils.

December 2004 added to the LTTE's downward spiral. A tsunami devastated the east coast of Sri Lanka, causing 35,000 deaths, destroying 100,000 homes and displacing 600,000 people. At least 1,000 members of the LTTE died, and many of the Sea Tiger's naval craft were destroyed.[194] A brief period of cooperation between the LTTE and the GoSL quickly turned sour as fighting over the handling and disposition of humanitarian relief ensued.[195] Throughout 2005, the LTTE was actively fundraising for the "Final War." Then, in August 2005, the LTTE resumed its campaign of assassinations.[196]

Presidential elections in November 2005 resulted in a victory for SLFP candidate Mahinda Rajapakse for a six-year term. His opponent, former Prime Minister Wickremasinghe, narrowly lost the election, due in part to an LTTE-engineered boycott of the election by the Tamil community.[197] Wickremasinghe was much more committed to the peace process and negotiating with the LTTE. Rajapakse, on the other hand, took a hard-line approach to the LTTE similar to his predecessor President Kumaratunga.[198]

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[192] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 23.

[193] Smith, *The Eelam Endgame?* 70.

[194] Kronstadt, *Sri Lanka: Background and U.S. Relations* 11.

[195] Smith, *The Eelam Endgame?* 71.

[196] Ibid., 72.

[197] Kronstadt, *Sri Lanka: Background and U.S. Relations*, 6.

[198] Ibid., 7.

The LTTE's boycott effectively put an end to the peace process in Sri Lanka.[199] Once the new leadership took its place, the peace negotiations and the ceasefire agreement promptly fell apart.

As violence progressively increased on both sides, one last attempt at peace was made during bilateral talks in Geneva in February 2006. A second round of scheduled talks never took place as violence spiraled out of control. "During the first half of 2006 around 1,000 lives were lost in conflict-related incidents."[200] The most significant incident took place on April 25, when a female suicide bomber attempted to assassinate the army chief of staff, Lieutenant General Fonseka.[201] The Sri Lankan Air Force responded by launching a wave of retaliatory strikes against LTTE positions. Clashes between the military and LTTE also escalated with at least 191 casualties in April 2006.[202] Although the SLMM remained in place until January 2008, it became readily apparent that the country slipped back into civil war.

H. CONCLUSION

In the case of Sri Lanka, peacekeeping operations through third-party intervention and domestic attempts at peace negotiation failed to contain or reduce violence and only extended the civil war. Several factors contributed to the failure of India's intervention. First, there was weak consent for the peace accord that quickly lost favor from both the GoSL and the LTTE. Second, the IPKF was not manned, prepared, or trained to conduct peacekeeping or peace enforcement operations. Their raid on the LTTE headquarters highlights the lack of restraint and minimum force that is fundamental to peace operations. Additionally, by committing human rights violations, the IPKF lost credibility and impartiality, which in turn, destroyed the consent of the Tamils to the provisions of the peace operation. Credibility and consent were also lost from the GoSL

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[199] Smith, *The Eelam Endgame?* 69.

[200] Ibid., 74.

[201] Ibid.

[202] Jon Lunn, Claire Taylor and Ian Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka* (London, England: House of Commons Library, 2009), http://www.parliament.uk/commons/lib/research/rp2009/rp09-051.pdf (accessed 08/25/2009). 14.

by India's lack of transparency. India presented itself as a mediator through the Indo-Sri Lankan Peace Accord and the IPKF while RAW secretly armed and trained Tamil militants. This sent contradictory signals and presented questions about the intentions and legitimacy of India's intervention. Finally, the intervention only extended the violent conflict. The GoSL was poised to defeat the Tamil extremists just prior to the intervention by India. India simply bought time for both sides to regroup and rearm. The LTTE's defeat was delayed almost two decades resulting in the death of between 80,000 to 100,000 people.[203]

President Kumaratunga's peace initiative in 1994 had even less success than India's intervention. Her proposals for constitutional devolution of power and increased minority rights were met with violence by the LTTE. It became readily apparent to her that the only way to obtain peace in Sri Lanka was to militarily defeat the LTTE, followed by constitutional provisions to address Tamil grievances. President Kumaratunga's "war for peace" strategy resulted in massive government spending to increase the size and capability of the armed forces. Subsequently, a series of military operations took place to regain control over the entire island and defeat the LTTE. As territory changed hands on both sides, the fighting produced high casualties and by the decade's end, the civil war was at a stalemate.

The SLMM led by the Norwegians to monitor the 2002 ceasefire agreement also proved to be ineffective. Although the ceasefire agreement and monitors created a short period of reduced violence, in the end there was no positive impact for a long-term settlement. As seen in the previous instances, each group regrouped, rearmed, and resumed fighting. In this case, however, the GoSL returned to hostilities with a few distinct advantages. First, the events of September 11, 2001, created a period in which violence associated with terrorism garnered little support throughout the world. This provided a period in which the GoSL could act with little intervention from the international community. Second, the defection of Colonel Karuna and his 6,000 cadres from the LTTE weakened Prabakharan militarily and diminished his position as the sole

[203] MacInnis, *Sri Lanka on Guard for Separatist Revival – Minister.*

representative of the Tamils. Lastly, the tsunami in December 2004 destroyed a significant portion of the LTTE's military equipment in the east, in addition to killing an estimated 1,000 rebels. Combined, these factors provided the GoSL an enormous advantage during the "final war" with the LTTE.

In each of Sri Lanka's attempts at peace, both the government and the rebels used the break in fighting to improve their fighting capability once the war resumed. The type of peace operation made little difference to the outcome. Peace enforcement, peacekeeping and domestic peace negotiation all produced the same result; the break in fighting extended the conflict by allowing each side to regroup and rearm. The election of Mahinda Rajapaksa to the Presidency in November 2005 set Sri Lanka on resolute path to end its insurgency once and for all.

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IV. EELAM IV: THE FINAL WAR

The "Final War" in Sri Lanka had several defining characteristics that set it apart from the previous decades of conflict. First, a government determined to defeat the LTTE was elected. Next, the international political environment had turned against "terrorism," so that world and regional powers backed Sri Lanka's campaign against the Tamil extremists. Several countries also provided Sri Lanka with military assistance in the form of arms, ammunition, training, technology, and intelligence. The GoSL leveraged this support to isolate the LTTE through the use of maritime interdiction. By isolating and starving the LTTE of arms, ammunition, and logistical support, the Sri Lankan Army was able to launch a successful ground offensive against a weakened enemy. This chapter will explain how political will, international support, and maritime interdiction combined to enable a successful ground offensive to defeat the LTTE.

A. POLITICS OF WAR

With renewed vigor and determination, the new president put the country on a course to end its protracted civil war through a decisive military defeat of the LTTE. He began by placing key personnel, with the same agenda, in top leadership positions. He asked his brother, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, to serve as Defense Secretary. He also named Major General Sarath Fonseka as Army commander.[204] The two new appointees were well acquainted. Gotabaya Rajapaksa served twenty years in the Sri Lankan Army alongside Fonseka when they were both lieutenant colonels fighting the LTTE.[205] By pairing these two like-minded leaders, the president created a team he trusted to coordinate a victory. Fonseka later discussed how he transformed the Army:

> When I took over, most officers had the mentality that we cannot win this war, as had been the case in the past three Eelam Wars. But my belief was that with the right strategy and right selection of meritorious officers at every level, the LTTE could be defeated. So I personally selected capable Division, Task Force as well as Brigade commanders, not on seniority, but

[204] B. Muralidhar Reddy, "The War is Over," *Frontline, India's National Magazine* 26, no. 12 (2009), http://www.hinduonnet.com/fline/fl2612/stories/20090619261200400.htm (accessed 04/10/2010).

[205] Ibid.

> based on their past capabilities in the battlefield. I handpicked these officers on their merits. I placed my confidence in them.[206]

The Defense Secretary also ensured that the Navy and Air Force were prepared for the challenges ahead. Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda assumed command of the Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) shortly before President Rajapaksa took office. Fortunately, he too was a visionary leader. He is credited with transforming the SLN into an effective fighting force using innovative tactics combined with increased use of intelligence and international cooperation. In addition, Air Marshal Roshan Goonatilake was appointed as Commander of the Air Force in June 2006. He effectively integrated new aircraft and technology into his force then used the new assets to execute aggressive air raids and perform critical casualty evacuation operations in support of ground operations.[207]

Sri Lanka also undertook a period of rapid military modernization during this period. By far, the largest financial contributor and arms supplier to Sri Lanka in recent years has been China, which has filled the gap left by India and Western countries concerned about the humanitarian crisis produced by fighting:

> It is only after India told us that it [would] not supply offensive weapons that we looked at other options," Fonseka asserted. "We first tried western countries but their weapons are expensive. Also the Western countries cannot be depended upon to continue the supplies when it [comes] to the crunch as it happened with us in the middle of the war when certain countries blocked supply of spare parts for our airplanes and helicopters. So we turned to China which offered us arms immediately on favorable terms.[208]

China, Pakistan, Russia, and Ukraine all provided support without the expectation that support was tied to increased influence in Sri Lanka. China is building a $1 billion port facility on the southern coast of Sri Lanka to support Chinese naval operations, among other uses. "Ever since Sri Lanka agreed to the plan, in March 2007, China [gave] it all the aid, arms and diplomatic support it [needed] to defeat the Tigers, without

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[206] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 54.

[207] Ibid., 55.

[208] Ibid., 128.

worrying about the West."[209] A $37.6 million deal to buy Chinese ammunition and ordnance was signed in April 2007.[210] China also gifted six F7 jet fighters to Sri Lanka in 2008.[211] In addition, "since 2007 China has encouraged Pakistan to sell weapons to Sri Lanka and to train Sri Lankan pilots to fly the Chinese fighters."[212] Equally significant, China has used its diplomatic power to block efforts to put Sri Lanka on the United Nations Security Council's agenda.[213] China's unquestioned support of Sri Lanka allowed President Rajapaksa to pursue his domestic agenda virtually unconstrained by outside interference.

Nevertheless, support to Sri Lanka from India and the United States was far from negligible. Indian domestic politics limited New Delhi's ability publicly to support Sri Lanka's war. The ruling United Progressive Alliance (UPA) depended on its coalition partner, the Dravidian Progress Federation (DMK) party in Tamil Nadu, to stay in power in Parliament. The DMK and the Tamil population in the Tamil Nadu opposed the GoSL's military efforts to end the conflict.[214] Consequently, while India publically refused to provide offensive weapons to Sri Lanka, in fact, its contributions were significant: a Sukanya-class Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) was given to Sri Lanka in 2002 while in 2006, India donated five Mi-17 helicopters to Sri Lanka. They have also provided fast attack craft, military radars, and logistical equipment.[215] In addition to material support, India shared intelligence and coordinated naval patrols with the SLN in order to limit arms smuggling into Sri Lanka.[216]

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[209] Jeremy Page, "Chinese Billions in Sri Lanka Fund Battle Against Tamil Tigers," Times Online, http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/asia/article6207487.ece (accessed 04/10/2010).

[210] Robert Karniol, "Sri Lanka Chooses New Company to Supply Ammunition," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (May 30, 2007), http://janes.search.com/ (accessed 08/12/2009).

[211] Page, *Chinese Billions in Sri Lanka Fund Battle Against Tamil Tigers.*

[212] Ibid.

[213] Ibid.

[214] Smith, *The Eelam Endgame?* 82.

[215] "Sri Lanka's Return to War: Limiting the Damage," *International Crisis Group* Asia Report, no. 146 (2008), http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5305 (accessed 04/10/2010).

[216] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, Interview by Justin Smith, 16 January 2010.

The United States provided a command and control system that provided Naval Headquarters, Colombo with better situational awareness of both friendly and enemy forces.[217] With better command and control, the capability of naval commanders to plan, direct, coordinate, and control forces was enhanced. Additionally, the United States provided critical intelligence information to assist in the destruction of the LTTE's maritime arms smuggling network.[218] U.S. arms sales also contributed to Sri Lanka's war effort, until March 2008, when it was suspended in response to human rights concerns.[219] As military operations progressed, by mid-2007 President Rajapaksa came under intense pressure to halt the offensive. In the short-term, his military campaign "cost him close allies, inflicted heavy economic damage, earned his government aid cuts, and provoked stinging censure from foreign governments and rights groups."[220] Despite the pressure, President Rajapaksa provided the necessary space that military commanders needed to defeat the Tamil extremists. "All the prior military regimes had the ability to defeat the LTTE but this time the political will was behind the military."[221] The combination of competent military service commanders, a well-armed and trained force, backed by a resolute president and secretary of defense, provided the GoSL a critical edge in the final campaign.

B. ISOLATING THE LTTE THROUGH MARITIME INTERDICTION

From the beginning of the civil war, the coastal regions controlled by the LTTE proved to be a significant security challenge to the SLN. Early in the conflict, LTTE maritime operations consisted of arms smuggling and human trafficking between Sri Lanka and Tamil Nadu. By 1984, the LTTE realized the importance of a dedicated

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[217] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[218] Mark Magnier, "Looking to Sri Lanka for Lessons; the Tactics it used to Defeat the Tamil Tiger Rebels could Help Other Nations Grappling with Insurgencies." *Los Angeles Times*, sec. World, May 23, 2009, http://proquest.umi.com.libproxy.nps.edu/pqdweb?did=1723676341&Fmt=7&clientId=11969&RQT=309&VName=PQD (accessed 08/12/2009).

[219] Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka*

[220] Christine Jayasinghe, "Eelam Endgame," *India Today*, sec. Neighbors, 30 January 2009, http://indiatoday.intoday.in/site/Story/26679/Neighbours/The+endgame.html (accessed 04/7/2010).

[221] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

maritime force, thereby creating the Sea Tigers.[222] Drawing on the Tamil community's traditional seafaring expertise, the Sea Tigers indigenously produced a variety of craft and developed tactics that would challenge the SLN for decades to come.[223] Most of the craft were 6 to 10 meters in length, armed with mounted machine guns, and capable of speeds up to 45 knots.[224] During the 1990s, the Sea Tigers infested the northern and eastern coasts. Their tactics evolved to include the use of swarm tactics and suicide boat attacks in offensive operations against the SLN.[225] In addition, the Sea Tigers deployed LTTE guerrillas in amphibious attacks against military bases in Pooneryn (1995), Mullaitivu (1996), Elephant Pass (2000), and the Jaffna Peninsula (2001).[226]

Heavy commercial fishing activity along the northern coast complicated Sri Lanka's attempts to counter the Sea Tigers. An estimated one million people in Sri Lanka and another 800,000 from Tamil Nadu depended on the fishing industry for their livelihood.[227] The area between the Jaffna Peninsula and Adams Bridge is not only rich with crab, prawn, and other marine life, but it was also a frequent route for smuggling operations by the LTTE.[228]

> The SLN did not allow fishing in this area from the Sri Lankan side but from the Indian side, on a single day there would be four or five thousand boats crossing the International Boundary Line (IBL) coming into this area for poaching. They did not have fish in their area so they came into Sri Lankan waters. The LTTE had the same fishing boats and used them to smuggle supplies across the Palk Strait.[229]

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[222] Murphy, *Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers.*

[223] "Sri Lanka | Maritime Counter Terrorism," *Asia-Pacific Defence Reporter*, November, 2009, , http://www.asiapacificdefencereporter.com/nov09/sri-lanka-maritime-terrorism (accessed 04/2/2010).

[224] Murphy, *Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers.*

[225] Tim Fish, "Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics," *Jane's Navy International* (February 19, 2009), http://search.janes.com (accessed 09/04/2009).

[226] *Sri Lanka | Maritime Counter Terrorism.*

[227] Ibid.

[228] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[229] Ibid.

The SLN had a difficult time distinguishing legitimate fishing vessels from LTTE smuggling vessels. A Sri Lankan Navy officer with extensive operational experience in the area described the difficulties identifying LTTE vessels:

> Their vessels are the same as the other fishing vessels. The best way to distinguish them is from their manners in the water. The LTTE boats will break off from the other fishing vessels. The fishing vessels have certain directions that they go because they are trawling. I could distinguish an LTTE vessel on the radar based on its maneuvers in the water.[230]

Despite substantial effort by the SLN to counter arms smuggling across the Palk Strait, the Sea Tigers "evolved into a formidable naval force commanding control over the northeastern seas."[231]

1. Destroying the LTTE Arms Smuggling Network

The LTTE began to break its dependence on Tamil Nadu for arms supplies in the mid-1990s. "Intelligence reports of that period point to four nations from which the LTTE's chief arms procurer, Kumaran Pathmanathan, got weapons: Burma, Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam."[232] Diaspora funding of the LTTE enabled the procurement of arms and ammunition along with a fleet of cargo ships to conduct smuggling operations. The LTTE used Thailand as a logistic shipping hub for its illicit activity.[233] The first of these ships was discovered and destroyed in February 1996 by the SLN when it was unloading weapons off the northeast coast of Sri Lanka. Another vessel was destroyed during SLN patrols in November 1997 along the northeast coast.[234]

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230 Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

231 "TamilNet: Soosai Reiterates Sovereign Right to Seas Bordering Tamil Homeland," TamilNet, http://www.tamilnet.com/art.html?artid=18111&catid=13 (accessed 04/10/2010).

232 Marwaan Macan-Markar, "Thailand Turns on Tamil Tigers," *Global Information Network*, sec. Politics, 10 November 2003, http://proquest.umi.com.libproxy.nps.edu/pqdweb?did=443447101&Fmt=7&clientId=11969&RQT=309&VName=PQD, (accessed 08/12/2009).

233 Ibid.

234 "Sri Lanka's Perspective on Maritime Security in the Region and its Relevance to the World – Sri Lanka Foreign Minister Rohitha B," *Asian Tribune* 9, no. 353 (4 June 2007), http://www.asiantribune.com/node/6006, (accessed 04/10/2010).

> The warehouse ships, which had no name, national flag or port of registry, would loiter about [1,000 nautical miles] from Sri Lanka and then advance to within [200 nautical miles] of the coast to transfer armaments to LTTE-operated fishing trawlers, which were escorted by the Sea Tiger fighting cadres and suicide boats. The logistics trawlers would ferry the equipment to Sri Lanka.[235]

When Vice Admiral Wasantha Karanngoda took command of the Sri Lanka Navy in September 2005, he immediately took a more aggressive and comprehensive approach to LTTE maritime operations. He mobilized his forces to track down and destroy the LTTE fleet. Operations began with an attempt to identify and destroy the LTTE fishing trawler fleet responsible for smuggling operations. Within a year, eleven LTTE trawlers had been destroyed.[236] The SLN used land-based radars to detect small boat threats up to 100 nautical miles from shore. Ships and boats were dispatched to chase down the potential threats. However, the operations took a significant toll on the SLN. The bulk of the Navy's assets were on continuous patrol to detect and destroy the LTTE trawlers hiding among thousands of civilian fishing vessels, which resulted in worn down and demoralized crews, while having little impact on smuggling operations.[237]

By mid-2006, Karanngoda changed tactics—rather than chase the small vessels, he decided to better utilize intelligence to target the LTTE cargo vessels, or "floating arms warehouses," that supplied the small boats. Under Karanngoda's command, the SLN, with international support, hunted down and destroyed the remaining LTTE cargo ships. "Between September 2006 and October 2007, the SLN succeeded in destroying eight large LTTE warehouse ships containing over 10,000 tons of war-related material."[238] Vice Admiral Karannagoda later described the contents of the ships:

> These vessels were carrying over 80,000 artillery rounds, over 100,000 mortar rounds, a bullet-proof jeep, three aircraft in dismantled form, torpedoes and surface-to-air missiles. There were a large number of

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[235] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[236] Tim Fish, "Interview: Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda, Commander of the Sri Lankan Navy," *Jane's Defence Weekly* (22 April 2009), http://search.janes.com, (accessed 02/20/2010).

[237] Shamindra Ferdinando, "How SLN Achieved Tactical Edge Over Sea Tigers," *The Island*, sec. Features, 9 December, 2009, http://www.island.lk/2009/12/09/features1.html (accessed 04/10/2010).

[238] *Sri Lanka | Maritime Counter Terrorism.*

> underwater swimmer delivery vehicles and a large quantity of diving equipment. There was radar equipment as well as outboard motors with high horsepower.[239]

The process of locating and destroying the LTTE cargo vessels required a coordinated and sustained effort. Sri Lanka successfully located the floating arms warehouses through both domestic and international intelligence gathering. A Sri Lankan Navy officer described his experience with the first attempts to track down the LTTE vessels:

> It all began in 2006 when we started to conduct aerial reconnaissance. The Indian Navy sent a Dornier aircraft to Colombo. I was the first one to go onboard. We went to the equator on an aerial patrol. We spotted one ship without [hull identification] and we came back and reported it. We sent our ships to go after the vessel but by the time they arrived, the ship had gone... Sri Lanka began its own reconnaissance effort with navy aircraft and India continued to conduct aerial missions to locate the LTTE ships.[240]

In addition to cooperation with India, the United States also provided intelligence to the SLN on the location of the LTTE arms warehouses. Through the collection of Signals Intelligence (SIGINT) and Imagery Intelligence (IMINT), U.S. Pacific Command passed the location of the LTTE cargo vessels to Sri Lankan Naval commanders.[241] The intelligence proved critical in locating the more remote LTTE vessels that were loitering more than a thousand nautical miles from Sri Lankan waters.[242]

Sri Lanka also maintained its own military intelligence corps. Under the Directorate of Military Intelligence (DMI), the Army, Navy, and Police forces all maintained a dedicated intelligence community. They did not have the high technology capabilities of larger militaries, so they had to rely primarily on HUMINT for information that came mainly from interrogations of captured LTTE cadre.[243] In May 2007, the

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[239] *Sri Lanka | Maritime Counter Terrorism.*

[240] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[241] Shanaka Jayasekara, "How the LTTE was Destroyed," *Asian Conflicts Reports*, no. 6 (June, 2009), www.ristex.jp/EN/terrorism/pdf/ACR-6.pdf (accessed 09/09/2009).

[242] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[243] Ibid.

Maldives Coast Guard intercepted a group of LTTE cadres attempting to capture an Indian fishing trawler for use as a smuggling platform. The SLN was allowed to interrogate the LTTE members. "This enabled the Navy to obtain first hand information regarding the LTTE fleet operating on the high seas as they had been engaged in moving armaments from the LTTE fleet to the Vanni using fishing trawlers."[244]

Tactical HUMINT operations in the LTTE controlled fishing villages were complicated by the difficulties of infiltrating agents yet provided the "primary information" on LTTE maritime operations nonetheless.[245] Despite the difficulties, the remaining LTTE floating arms warehouses were located through the combined efforts of domestic HUMINT collection, Indian and Sri Lankan naval reconnaissance missions, and SIGINT and IMINT assistance from the United States. Once the LTTE vessels were located, the SLN had to develop tactics to interdict the vessels that were located well beyond the SLN's normal capability to conduct operations (see Figure 2).

[244] Ferdinando, *How SLN Achieved Tactical Edge Over Sea Tigers.*

[245] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

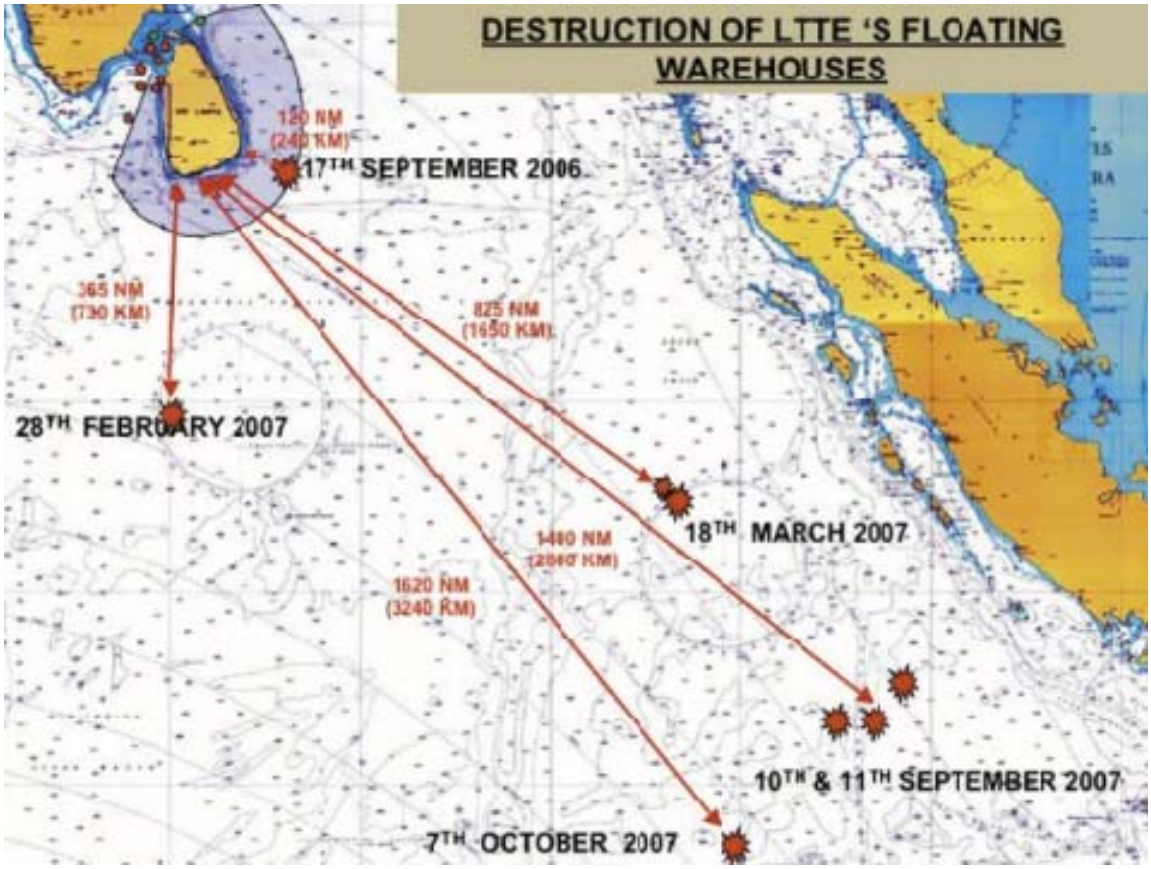

Figure 2. Map of SLN operations to destroy the LTTE arms smuggling fleet.[246]

In the year between September 2006 and October 2007, the SLN interdicted and destroyed the remaining eight LTTE arms warehouses using a flotilla of three offshore patrol vessels (OPV) supported by "old tankers, merchant vessels, and fishing trawlers."[247] (See Figure 2). A Sri Lankan Navy officer described the operation:

> We had to make do with what we had. We had large fishing tenders and we sent them out from Colombo and Trincomalee but did not tell them where they were going—only the captain knew. Once they reached outside Sri Lanka's telecommunication range, the ship's crew were briefed on where they were going. Fuel was loaded into our LST craft and sent out to refuel the SLN OPV's. Ninety percent of the navy did not know about the operations to destroy the LTTE ships.[248]

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[246] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[247] Ibid.

[248] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

Figure 3. Destruction of LTTE vessel on September 10, 2007.[249]

2. Countering Maritime Terrorism and Sea Piracy

The SLN also had to counter LTTE maritime terrorism and sea piracy operations affecting military movements, logistic operations, and commercial shipping. In the mid-1980s, the SLN began purchasing Israeli Dvora-class Fast Attack Craft (FAC) along with Shanghai-class fast gunboats and other coastal craft to meet its coastal defense and interdiction requirements.[250] Since the formation of the Sea Tigers in 1984, they "destroyed between a third and half of the Sri Lankan navy's coastal fleet."[251] The Sea Tigers used swarm tactics combined with suicide boats to overwhelm and destroy SLN vessels. The first suicide attack by the Sea Tigers against a SLN vessel occurred in 1994.[252] More significant, an October 2000 attack crippled a SLN-operated ferry used to transport troops to and from the Jaffna peninsula. The suicide craft were able to follow a cargo vessel into the Trincomalee harbor in order to get close enough to attack the ferry. "A total of five suicide craft were involved: two were destroyed by the SLN, two others escaped despite one being damaged, while the fifth completed its mission

[249] "Sri Lanka Navy Destroy Three LTTE Ships and Demolish their Arms Shipment Capabilities," Sri Lanka Navy, http://www.navy.lk/index.php?id=410 (accessed 04/10/2010).

[250] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[251] Murphy, *The Blue, Green, and Brown: Insurgency and Counter-Insurgency on the Water*, 63–79.

[252] Murphy, *Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers.*

successfully."[253] Prior to the Sri Lankan Army regaining control of Elephant Pass in early 2009, "the entire responsibility of transporting 40,000 to 50,000 members" of the Sri Lankan military and Police forces along with food, supplies, arms and ammunition, rested with the SLN.[254] The more common attacks were on the Dvora fast attack craft (FAC) responsible for patrolling the littorals. In a January 2006 attack, a Sea Tiger suicide craft hid among a cluster of fishing vessels at night. When the FAC patrolling the area was in range, it rammed the suicide craft into the FAC, killing fifteen SLN sailors.[255] In 2006 alone, the "SLN had 21 encounters with the Sea Tigers."[256]

Sea piracy by the Sea Tigers also proved to be a frequent threat in the coastal regions of Sri Lanka. Some of the large cargos vessels commandeered by the Sea Tigers included the "Irish Mona (August 1995), Princess Wave (August 1996), Athena (May 1997), Misen (July 1997), Morong Bong (July 1997), Cordiality (Sept 1997) and Princess Kash (August 1998)" and the MV Farah III (December 2006).[257] A Sri Lankan Navy officer described the most recent incident:

> The Jordanian ship *Farah III* coming from India, became disabled, and began drifting into the land area in which the LTTE had control. The LTTE boarded the ship and took it close to shore then beached it and made a base out of it. They used the ship and its radars and communications equipment as a platform to launch attacks. The ship was also full of rice, which they also used. The ship's crew were all released. They were taken by small boat to the beach… and through the ICRC the crew were transferred to Colombo.[258]

Even more significant, "a ship with a cargo of 32,000 mortar shells from Zimbabwe Defence Industries (ZDI) left the Mozambican port of Beira on May 23, 1997" on its way to Colombo to resupply the Sri Lankan military. The ship never arrived

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[253] Murphy, *Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers.*

[254] "Secretary of Defence Pays Glowing Tribute to Sri Lanka Navy for its Decisive Role in Eliminating LTTE Terrorism," http://www.navy.lk/index.php?id=1829 (accessed 08/31/2009).

[255] Murphy, *Maritime Threat: Tactics and Technology of the Sea Tigers.*

[256] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[257] Vijay Sakhuja, *Sea Piracy in South Asia,* South Asia Analysis Group (2005), http://www.saag.org/common/uploaded_files/paper1259.html (accessed 11/13/2009).

[258] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

and ZDI claimed that the *Limassol*, an LTTE cargo vessel, offloaded the munitions at sea under the guise of Sri Lankan government authority.[259]

To counter both maritime terrorism and sea piracy, Vice Admiral Karannagoda developed an innovative scheme he termed the "Small Boat Concept." The scheme was based on new equipment, designed by Sri Lanka's Naval Research and Development Project Office, and new tactics that "effectively copied the Sea Tigers' asymmetric tactics, but on a much larger scale."[260]

> The Small Boat Concept came into innovation from [Vice Admiral Karannagoda] because whenever we patrolled in the LTTE coastal areas, the Sea Tigers would attack us with 20 to 30 boats. In those 20 to 30 boats, there would be five or six suicide boats that were indistinguishable from the rest of the boats but were filled with explosives. When we were fighting swarm tactics, they had more of a chance of hitting us. So, we went back to their techniques and developed small boats on our own. When they attacked us with 20, we responded with 50.[261]

The purpose of the Small Boat Concept was to counter the Sea Tigers' swarm and suicide tactics by overwhelming them with "large numbers of small high-speed, heavily armed inshore patrol craft (IPC)."[262] The R&D engineers developed three, indigenously produced, fiberglass-based IPC variants: a 17-meter command and fighting craft, a 14-meter fighting craft, and a 23-foot "Arrow." The craft were fitted with 250-horsepower outboard engines (two engines for the Arrow and four for the 14-meter and 17-meter craft), providing a top speed of between 35 and 40 nautical miles per hour. They were armed with various combinations of .50-caliber machine guns, double- and single-barreled 23 mm guns, and 40 mm Automatic Grenade Launchers (AGL).[263]

The boats were organized into six-boat units under one commander. One larger boat (17-meters) provided a command platform with the remaining made up of smaller

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[259] Sakhuja, *Sea Piracy in South Asia.*

[260] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[261] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[262] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[263] Ibid.

boats. The 17-meter boat had the communication systems in order to facilitate command and control.[264] These units were organized into Rapid Action Boat Squadrons (RABS) totaling 25 to 30 craft.[265]

> RABS personnel were hand-picked from the naval community who were willing to fight and make it through the extensive training on boat handling and weaponry. … Advanced training was conducted with U.S. Navy SEALS. They brought their RHIB boats out to train with us twice a year. They came with a whole lot of training operators and staff. The training lasted for about two months at a time.[266]

The squadrons were then stationed in high-threat locations along the northern and eastern coast to enable them to rapidly respond to and interdict Sea Tiger units at sea.[267] (See Figure 4). Additionally, the squadrons were flexible enough to relocate in short order to combine with other squadrons for specific operations or battles. "The SLN's ability to concentrate a force at short notice that was able to confront the Sea Tigers was an important factor in gaining the upper hand in sea battles."[268]

Naval camps were set up along the northern and eastern coast to provide bases for the RABS and land-based radar systems (see Figure 4). The radars proved to be another essential element of the SLN's ability to defeat the Sea Tigers. In 2006, small land-based radar stations were set up along the coast from Point Pedro in the north to Trincomalee in the east. The only area not covered was an LTTE stronghold between Chundikkulam and Mullaittivu.[269] (See Figure 4). "In November 2007, the United States provided Sri Lanka with a radar-based maritime surveillance system" which significantly increased the

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[264] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[265] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[266] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[267] Ibid.

[268] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[269] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

SLN's ability to detect and interdict Sea Tiger activities.[270] The Communications Officer at Naval Headquarters in Colombo at the time, made the following comments about U.S. assistance:

> The United States was tremendously helpful with our command and control systems. The backbone of our networking was set up by the U.S. We had communications in place but the U.S. helped us network our communications and radar systems so that there was direct real-time communications with Naval Headquarters in Colombo. In the later part of the war, we had the ability to view about 20 radar stations at Headquarters.[271]

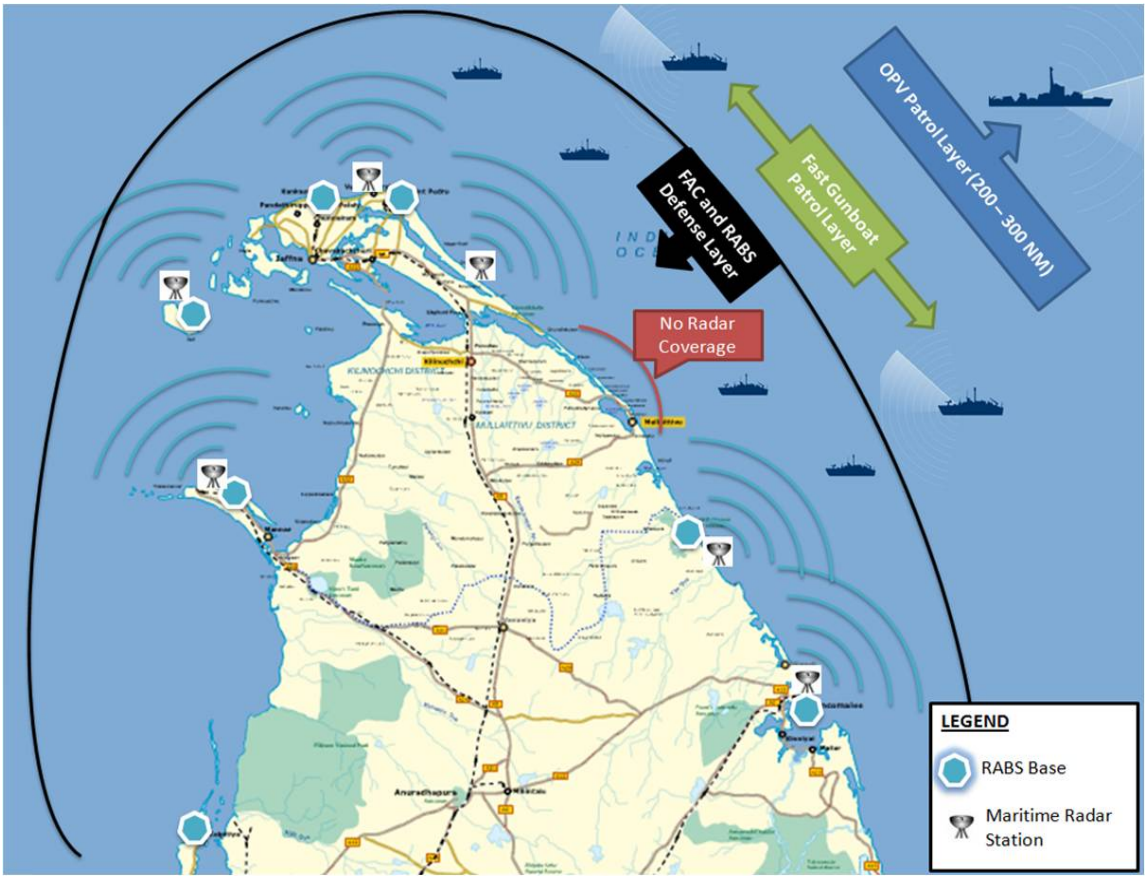

Figure 4. Sri Lanka's Layered Defense System.[272]

[270] Kronstadt, *Sri Lanka: Background and U.S. Relations.*

[271] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[272] Created by Justin Smith.

With the RABS, maritime surveillance systems, and improved command and control, the SLN implemented a system of layered defense to counter maritime terrorism, sea piracy, and smuggling. The first layer consisted of RABS stationed along the coast to rapidly respond to coastal threats. Next, the Dvora Fast Attack Craft (FAC) maintained constant patrols to detect illicit activity. Fast gunboats provided another layer seaward of the FAC's patrol routes. Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV) provided the final cordon 200 to 300 nautical miles off the coast. Complete radar coverage of the area also assisted in alerting the SLN to Sea Tiger activity.[273] The layered defense provided the SLN with a comprehensive approach to counter LTTE threats.

3. Result of Maritime Interdiction Operations

The Sri Lankan Navy's maritime interdiction operations proved invaluable to the defeat of the Tamil Tigers. Aggressive and coordinated operations led to the destruction of the LTTE arms smuggling network by the SLN. By preventing access to illicit arms, "the LTTE was forced to go back to rudimentary tactics like using improvised mortars and rockets instead of military grade munitions and arms."[274] Facing desperate LTTE rebels, Sri Lankan ground forces rapidly liberated LTTE-controlled areas with far fewer casualties.[275]

The SLN was also able to establish maritime dominance in its coastal waters. Through innovative tactics and an indigenous boat-building program, the SLN implemented its Small Boat Concept to counter Sea Tiger swarm and suicide attacks. The RABS deployed throughout island to augment the layered defenses of the Dvora FAC, Fast gunboats, and OPVs. The result was fourfold. First, smuggling operations across Palk Strait reduced drastically. Next, the LTTE's Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCs) were eliminated, thereby preventing attacks from the sea or the insertion or extraction of ground forces by sea. Additionally, the Sri Lankan military regained control of the SLOCs, thus impeding sea piracy and maritime terrorism. Finally, during

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[273] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[274] Ibid.

[275] *Sri Lanka | Maritime Counter Terrorism.*

the concluding months of the war, a naval blockade of the seaward access to the final LTTE stronghold prevented the escape of top LTTE leadership.[276] The effective use of the Sri Lankan Navy was a critical factor in enabling ground forces to decisively defeat the rebels.

C. FINAL GROUND OFFENSIVE

In April 2006, the LTTE walked away from the peace process and returned to widespread violence. Following a series of assassinations and bombings, on July 21, 2006, the LTTE closed the sluice gates of the Mavil Aru reservoir in the Trincomalee district of eastern Sri Lanka.[277] Nearly 30,000 people in government-controlled areas depended on the reservoir water for drinking and irrigation. After failed negotiations, the GoSL launched Operation Watershed to regain control of the Mavil Aru reservoir.[278] By August 8, 2006, the military had reclaimed Mavil Aru but LTTE attacks continued in the east.[279] The Sri Lankan Naval base at Trincomalee was targeted with artillery fire from across the bay at Sampoor. The military shifted its offensive to Sampoor, first by softening the LTTE with artillery and aerial bombardment. Then, they deployed special force elements in coordination with infantry battalions to wrap up the operation.[280] On September 4, 2006, the military defeated the LTTE in Sampoor and turned their focus southward to the remaining areas of LTTE control in the eastern province.

On the momentum of the successes in Tricomalee and Sampoor, the Eastern campaign continued on December 4, 2006 in the Batticoloa district.[281] Ground operations over the coming months provided the Sri Lankan Army (SLA) with the ability to test new tactics prior to moving into the LTTE's stronghold in the north. General Fonseka and his commanders developed tactics that minimized the limitations of using large conventional forces against LTTE guerrilla elements. Long Range Reconnaissance

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[276] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[277] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 33.

[278] Ibid., 34.

[279] Ibid., 37.

[280] Ibid., 38.

[281] Ibid., 41.

Patrol (LRRP) teams were introduced as deep penetration units inserted well in advance of conventional operations. Fonseka later described his reasoning: "We were far too slow to take on the smaller and quicker terrorist teams in the past. So I decided to form the 8-man teams, who were independent, mobile, and lethal."[282] The eight-man Special Forces teams "went behind enemy lines, assassinating Tigers, crippling infrastructure in rebel-held areas and reporting target locations to the army and air force."[283] The SLA was assisted in their operations by paramilitary forces led by former-LTTE leader Colonel Karuna.[284] In June 2007, the GoSL gained full control of the Eastern province for the first time in fourteen years.[285]

[282] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 93.

[283] Magnier, *Looking to Sri Lanka for Lessons; the Tactics it used to Defeat the Tamil Tiger Rebels could Help Other Nations Grappling with Insurgencies*, A.28.

[284] Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka.*

[285] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 48.

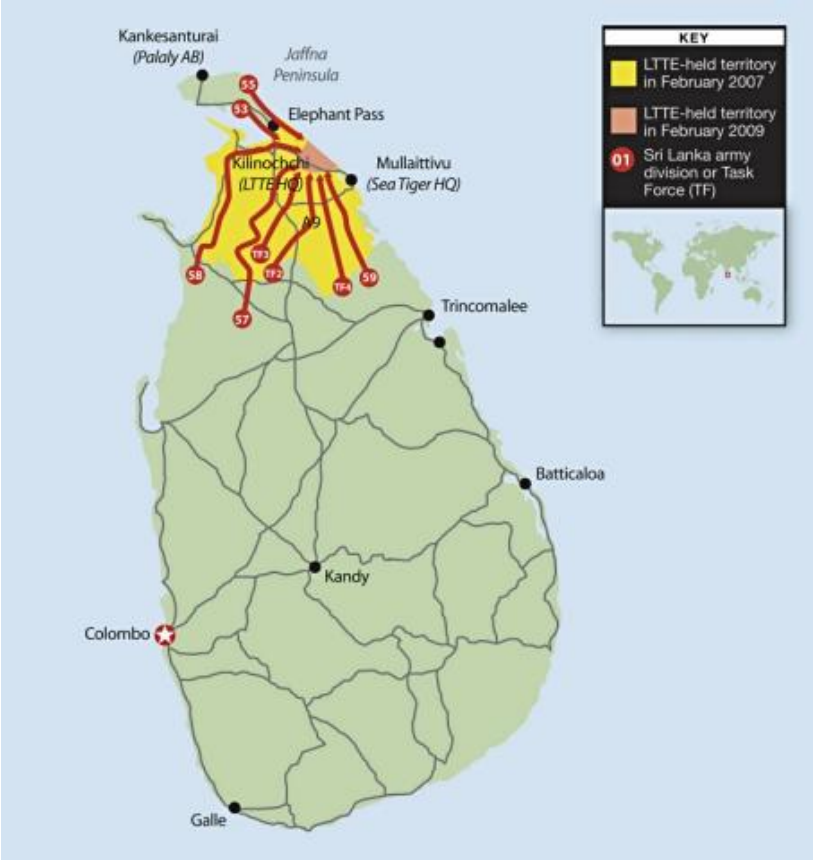

Figure 5. Northern Offensive.[286]

With a newfound confidence, the Sri Lankan military turned their fight to the Northern campaign in the vast area of the Wanni, the region between the Jaffna peninsula and the southern FDL. In preparation for the operation, Fonseka positioned two divisions in Jaffna and three divisions (supported by several Task Forces) along the southern FDL (see Figure 5). Instead of concentrating on a single front, simultaneous offensive operations were launched along the seventy-mile southern defense line.[287] Operations commenced in September 2007 in Mannar (northwest), Vavuniya (north central), and Weli Oya (northeast) along the FDL. The multi-front offensive resulted in the LTTE

[286] Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment, *The Tamil Tigers' Territorial Losses*, 2010)

[287] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 93.

dispersing its forces in order to attempt to halt the SLA operations.[288] However, the LTTE lacked the manpower and firepower to confront the SLA's aggressive tactics. Fonseka later described the tactics:

> One of the many unconventional things that we did in Eelam War IV was not to depend too much on the traditional supply routes. The LTTE expected us to march on, hugging the roads. But my troops were more than willing to abandon the conventional way. They marched through jungles, waded through chest deep water under pouring rain, and yet kept going forward. This took the terrorists by surprise. They had never seen the Army adopt such tactics. Those were supposed to be LTTE tactics in many people's eyes. But my commanders and troops showed adaptability and daring in turning the conventional strategies on their head to totally confuse and annihilate the terrorists.[289]

As military operations progressed, the entire northeastern coast fell back under government control by November 2008. This opened a new land route to the Jaffna peninsula, which was previously supplied only by sea and air.[290] Killinochchi and Elephant Pass were the next to fall as the two SLA divisions in Jaffna pushed south, meeting the northbound divisions.[291]

By March 2009, the LTTE was corralled into an area less than 30 square kilometers.[292] As a desperate measure, the LTTE used civilians as human shields to slow SLA advances. Concern for civilian casualties complicated the operation with an estimated 250,000 civilians in the area still under LTTE control.[293] In April 2009, the GoSL established a 20-square-kilometer No Fire Zone (NFZ) for civilians to take refuge.[294] The NFZ also provided the 2,000 remaining LTTE rebels a sanctuary, though a diminishing one. As the weeks progressed, the NFZ was condensed down to a "narrow stretch of land opening to the Indian Ocean from the east and to the Nanthikadal lagoon

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[288] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 97.

[289] Ibid., 103.

[290] Ibid., 111.

[291] Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka.*

[292] Ibid.

[293] Ibid.

[294] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 154.

from the west."[295] Tens of thousands of civilians were allowed to leave the No Fire Zone in the final weeks.[296] Beginning early morning on May 17, 2009, the remaining LTTE rebels made several attempts to breach the Army's cordon. Each attack consisted of hundreds of rebels, some breaching the first line of SLA defenses but their advances ultimately ending by a second line of defense.[297] Early on May 19, 2009, several Special Force teams deployed into the last remaining LTTE area and killed the remaining rebels. Among the bodies was the LTTE founder and leader, Vellupillai Prabhakaran.[298] With the exception of the chief arms procurer, Kumaran Pathmanathan, all the top leadership of the LTTE were killed during Eelam IV. Pathmanathan is in Sri Lankan custody after being arrested in August 2009 in Thailand.[299] The twenty-six-year civil war was finally declared over on May 19, 2009.

[295] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 10.

[296] Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka.*

[297] Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 11.

[298] "Sri Lanka's Rebel Leader 'Killed'," *BBC NEWS*, sec. South Asia, 19 May, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8055015.stm#map, (accessed 04/10/2010).

[299] "New Tamil Tiger Leader KP Arrested in Thailand, Brought to Colombo," *Thaindian News*, sec. World News, 7 August, 2009, http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/world-news/new-tamil-tiger-leader-kp-arrested-in-thailand-brought-to-colombo_100228768.html, (accessed 04/10/2010).

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V. CONCLUSION

Sri Lanka's civil war cost the nation between 80,000 and 100,000 lives since the war began in 1983. In the final thirty-three months of fighting, during Eelam IV, 22,000 militants, 13,000 civilians, and nearly 4,000 government force personnel were killed.[300] While this was a high price to pay, twenty-six years of civil war appeared to demonstrate that third-party interventions in Sri Lanka only extended the conflict, added to its humanitarian costs, and only produced stalemate, one which perhaps benefited the rebels, but certainly not the government. Only in a post-9/11 world less tolerant of "terrorism" was the government of Sri Lanka able to garner enough international support to seek a military victory. The GoSL was supported with military training, arms, equipment, and intelligence from a host of nations. However, an important component of victory proved to be the ability of the Sri Lankan Navy through maritime interdiction to attack and disrupt the LTTE logistic network responsible for smuggling arms into the country. In the end, this created an imbalance that allowed the military decisively to defeat the LTTE.

A. INTERVENTION IN CONFLICT

India's direct intervention in Sri Lanka's conflict had detrimental effects. Instead of halting violence and negotiating peace, India's involvement perpetuated the conflict. First, India stepped in at a time when the Sri Lankan military was poised to defeat the rebels. Intervention by India at this critical moment prevented saved the LTTE from imminent defeat. Had the GoSL been permitted to defeat Tamil extremists, a peace with moderate Tamils could have occurred. The introduction of the Indian Peacekeeping Forces (IPKF) into Sri Lanka caused both the LTTE and the GoSL to conclude that the IPKF posed a greater threat than did their indigenous enemy. They colluded to expel the IPKF and then quickly resumed their war once India decided that intervention had been too costly.

[300] "Sri Lanka Assessment 2010," South Asia Terrorism Portal, http://www.satp.org/satporgtp/countries/shrilanka/index.html, (accessed 04/10/2010).

The Norwegian-led Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission (SLMM), put in place to monitor a 2002 ceasefire agreement (CFA), also failed in its attempt to bring about a negotiated peace. The CFA did reduce violence for four years. However, time did not work in the interest of peace because of several critical events that took place. First, the 2004 defection of Colonel Karuna and his 6,000 cadres from the LTTE weakened Prabakharan militarily and diminished his position as the sole representative of the Tamils. By 2006, the Karuna faction was actually fighting for the GoSL against their former LTTE comrades.[301] Second, the tsunami of December 2004 killed an estimated 1,000 rebels and destroyed a significant portion of the LTTE's military equipment in the east.[302] Finally, the events of 9/11 made the international political environment less tolerant of terrorist violence. In addition, political support gave Sri Lanka the time needed to regroup, rearm, and return to fighting in a much stronger position.

B. PREPARING FOR THE FINAL OFFENSIVE

With support of the international community, Sri Lanka was able to isolate and overpower the LTTE militants. China, Russia, Ukraine, Israel, India, Pakistan, the United States, and others provided military support to Sri Lanka. In 2007, Sri Lanka's largest arms supplier, China, signed a $37.6-million deal to supply Sri Lanka with ammunition and ordnance.[303] They also supplied fast gunboats and donated six F7 fighter aircraft in 2008.[304] Russia supplied transport helicopters and other weaponry.[305] Ukraine sold four MiG-27 fighters to Sri Lanka in 2007. Israel supplied three Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and several Dvora Fast Attack Craft.[306] Pakistan supplied tanks, rocket launchers, mortars, and communications equipment.[307] India supplied fast attack craft,

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301 Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka.*

302 Kronstadt, *Sri Lanka: Background and U.S. Relations.*

303 Karniol, *Sri Lanka Chooses New Company to Supply Ammunition.*

304 Page, *Chinese Billions in Sri Lanka Fund Battle Against Tamil Tigers.*

305 Jon Grevatt, "Sri Lanka Orders Russian Helicopters in Preparation for Post-Conflict Ear," *Jane's Defence Industry* (19 May, 2009), http://search.janes.com (accessed 4/17/2010).

306 Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka.*

307 M. R. Narayan Swamy, "Sri Lanka's SOS to Pakistan for Urgent Arms Supplies," *Thaindian News*, sec. World, 02 April 2008, http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/sri-lankas-sos-to-pakistan-for-urgent-arms-supplies_10033531.html, (accessed 04/17/2010).

military radars, logistical equipment, helicopters, and offshore patrol vessels (OPV).[308] The United States provided small arms systems, OPVs, small boats, and a maritime surveillance system.[309] In addition to material support, India, Pakistan, and the United States provided advanced military training and shared critical intelligence information with Sri Lanka.[310] By establishing an extensive network of military suppliers and trainers, Sri Lanka gained an edge against the LTTE.

International support, by itself, was not going to win the war in Sri Lanka. In late 2005, the newly elected President Mahinda Rajapaksa put the country on a course to militarily end to the war. He began by placing his brother, Gotabaya Rajapaksa, to head the military as Defense Secretary and named Major General Sarath Fonseka as the top Army commander.[311] Vice Admiral Wasantha Karannagoda assumed command of the Sri Lankan Navy (SLN) shortly before President Rajapaksa took office. Air Marshal Roshan Goonatilake was later appointed as Commander of the Air Force in June 2006.[312] The leaders transformed the military into a force capable and determined to defeat the LTTE. In 2006, the Sri Lankan Army increased its ranks by 40,000 personnel and restructured its leadership by placing aggressive commanders in key positions.[313] The SLN grew from 15,000 in 2005 to nearly 50,000 in 2008 in order to support the rapid expansion of small boat units.[314] With new aggressive and skilled leadership in place, the military turned its focus to tactics and operations to defeat the LTTE.

Through the introduction of innovative tactics, the Sri Lankan military was able to offset the LTTE's advantages in guerrilla warfare and maritime terrorism. The army developed Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) teams to minimize the limitations

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308 *Sri Lanka's Return to War: Limiting the Damage*, 04/10/2010.

309 Tim Fish, "US Delivers RHIBs and Surveillance System to Sri Lankan Navy," *Jane's Navy International* (01 December, 2007), http://search.janes.com/, (accessed 04/10/2010).

310 Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka.*

311 Reddy, *The War is Over*, 4/10/2010.

312 Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 116.

313 Ibid.

314 Ferdinando, *How SLN Achieved Tactical Edge Over Sea Tigers.*

of using a large conventional force against LTTE guerrilla elements.[315] The navy developed the Small Boat Concept (SBC) to counter Sea Tiger swarm and suicide tactics.[316] Indigenously manufactured small boats were produced by the hundreds to support the SBC.[317] The air force enhanced its capability to conduct air raids and casualty evacuation in support of ground operations.[318] With an effective fighting force in place, the government began operations to weaken the LTTE's military capability by disrupting its logistic network prior to commencing large-scale offensive operations.

C. TARGETING THE LOGISTICS NETWORK

The SLN was best suited to take on the responsibility of countering LTTE arms smuggling operations in Sri Lanka. Tamil diaspora funded LTTE operations through a business conglomerate generating an estimated $300 million per year.[319] In the 1990s, the LTTE purchased a fleet of cargo vessels and set up logistics operations for arms smuggling in Burma then later in Thailand.[320] Vice Admiral Karanngoda promptly focused his navy on disrupting the smuggling network. "Between September 2006 and October 2007, the SLN succeeded in destroying eight large LTTE warehouse ships containing over 10,000 tons of war-related material."[321] With the elimination of the entire LTTE cargo fleet, arms smuggling was reduced by more than 80 percent.[322]

The remaining arms were smuggled into Sri Lanka via fishing trawlers across the Palk Strait from Tamil Nadu. Counter-smuggling operations in this area were complicated by the Sea Tiger's control of the northeastern coastal seas using swarm and suicide tactics against the SLN. Karanngoda countered the LTTE tactics with the implementation of his Small Boat Concept. The scheme "effectively copied the Sea

315 Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 116.

316 Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

317 Ferdinando, *How SLN Achieved Tactical Edge Over Sea Tigers.*

318 Gokhale, *Sri Lanka: From War to Peace*, 116.

319 Lunn, Taylor and Townsend, *War and Peace in Sri Lanka.*

320 Macan-Markar, *Thailand Turns on Tamil Tigers*, 1.

321 *Sri Lanka | Maritime Counter Terrorism.*

322 Ranil Wijayapala, "Sri Lanka Navy Ready to Meet New Challenges," http://www.navy.lk/index.php?id=314, (accessed 04/17/2010).

Tigers' asymmetric tactics, but on a much larger scale."[323] The SLN overwhelmed the Sea Tigers with large numbers of small, high-speed, heavily armed small boats organized into squadrons of 25 to 30 boats.[324] The Rapid Action Boat Squadrons (RABS) were stationed in high-threat locations along the northern and eastern coast to enable them to rapidly respond to and interdict Sea Tiger units at sea.[325] Beginning in 2006, the SLN also set up land-based maritime radar stations along the northern and eastern coasts to assist in detecting and interdicting Sea Tiger incursions. With RABS and maritime surveillance augmenting patrols by Dvora FAC, Fast gunboats, and OPVs, a comprehensive system of layered defense was in place to reestablish control of the sea lines of communication (SLOC) in the northern seas. Control of the SLOCs nearly eliminated the remaining arms smuggling operations and had a complementing effect of impeding sea piracy and maritime terrorism. Once the LTTE logistic network was severed, Sri Lankan ground forces began major offensive operations. Once ammunition stockpiles were depleted, "the LTTE was forced to go back to rudimentary tactics like using improvised mortars and rockets instead of military grade munitions and arms."[326] Facing LTTE rebels desperately weakened by a lack of materiel, Sri Lankan ground forces rapidly liberated LTTE-controlled areas with far fewer casualties.[327]

[323] Fish, *Sri Lanka Learns to Counter Sea Tigers' Swarm Tactics.*

[324] Ibid.

[325] Ibid.

[326] Sri Lanka Navy Officer, *Interview by Justin Smith.*

[327] *Sri Lanka | Maritime Counter Terrorism.*

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